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SALAR
DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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At 65%, Bihar sees highest voter turnout; DyCM's convoy attacked

EC says 1st phase of polls peaceful but protests, boycotts mark the day

PATNA, 6 NOV

Bihar recorded its highest-ever voter turnout on Thursday, with 64.66 per cent of 3.75 crore electors casting their ballot across 121 constituencies in 18 districts in the first phase of the Assembly elections.

The previous high was 62.57 per cent in 2000, while turnout during the first polls in 1951-52 was 42.6 per cent, the lowest in the state's history.

Election Commission said polling concluded "peacefully in a festive mood", but the ground reality told a different story, with multiple protests, boycotts, technical glitches and incidents of violence reported from across the state.

The most dramatic incident occurred in Khoriari village, Lakhisarai, where voters hurled slippers and cow dung at the convoy of Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Kumar Sinha. Video footage showed villagers surrounding his vehicle, raising "murdabad" slogans and blocking his entry, reportedly angry about lack of development.

Sinha, a three-time MLA contesting from Lakhisarai, blamed the RJD: "These are RJD's goons. They know the NDA is returning to power. They turned away my polling agent and didn't let him vote," he told ANI.

Tensions were reported elsewhere too. In Siwan, locals greeted BJP candidate Devesh Kant Singh with "vote chor" slogans and forced him to leave. Reports by Aaj Tak and accounts from locals alleged that the names of Muslim and Yadav voters were removed from electoral rolls in large numbers, though the Election Commission has not commented on this yet.

In Nalanda, four BJP workers were detained in Biharsharif for allegedly distributing voter slips near booths 226–232.

In Saran, CPI MLA and candidate Dr Satyendra Yadav was attacked in Jaitpur area of Manjhi; his vehicle was pelted with bricks, stones and sticks, leaving it damaged.

The second and final phase of polling will take place on 11 November, with counting scheduled for 14 November. *—Salar News*

>>>More on Pages 3 and 5

People carry an elderly man on a cot to a polling station during the first phase of the Bihar Assembly elections at Danapur in Patna on Thursday ***PHOTO: PTI***

EVMs MALFUNCTION

EVM glitches were reported across Bihar on polling day, triggering protests and delays at several booths. Faulty machines halted voting in Danapur, Raghopur, Maner, Asthawan, Makama, Gandhinagar, Bakhtiyarpur, Bihta, Fatuha and Darbhanga, with some booths recording only a handful of votes before breaking down. In Lalganj, chaos erupted as voters raised "vote theft" slogans.

COPS STOP VOTERS IN DANAPUR

In Nasirganj Ghat in Danapur, Bihar, cops allegedly stopped residents from operating or boarding boats, leaving thousands unable to reach their polling booths. Viral videos show villagers claiming their voting rights were suppressed, with some accusing the BJP of orchestrating the blockade. Over 10,000 villagers depend on a single steamer that runs only once a day. RJD shared clips of an overcrowded boat and massive crowds on the riverbank, claiming 50,000–60,000 people may miss voting due to the suspension of boat services.

In Khoriari village, Lakhisarai, angry voters hurled slippers and threw cow dung at the convoy of Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Kumar Sinha. Video clips show villagers surrounding his vehicle, raising 'murdabad' slogans and blocking his entry ***PHOTOS: PTI***

Nat'l anthem made to welcome British: BJP MP Kageri

BENGALURU, 6 NOV

A political row broke out in Karnataka after BJP MP Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri claimed that India's national anthem Jana Gana Mana was written "to welcome the British official", prompting sharp criticism from Congress minister Priyank Kharge, who dismissed the remark as "utter nonsense" and an "RSS WhatsApp history lesson".

Speaking at an event in Honnavar marking 150 years of Vande Mataram, Kageri argued that the national song deserved greater prominence and that both Vande Mataram and Jana Gana Mana were equal in stature. He added, "There were strong calls to make Vande Mataram the national anthem, but our ancestors decided to keep both. Jana Gana Mana was composed to welcome the British officer. We have accepted and are following it."

The MP said Vande Mataram continued to inspire the nation and should reach "schools, colleges, youngsters and the masses".

Kharge, responding on X, countered that Rabindranath Tagore's hymn Bharoto Bhagyo Bidhata—whose first stanza became Jana Gana Mana, was first sung at the Indian National Congress session in Calcutta in 1911, not as a tribute to British royalty. *—PTI*

FIGHT FOR RESPECT

Anganwadi workers protest at Freedom Park, demanding gratuity for retired staff in Bengaluru on Thursday ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

PIL in SC seeks 'health emergency' as Delhi chokes

NEW DELHI, 6 NOV

A PIL has been filed in the Supreme Court by a wellness expert seeking urgent judicial intervention to tackle a "persistent and systemic failure" in addressing the country's rising air pollution levels which has reached proportions of a "public health emergency".

The plea was filed on 24 October by Luke Christopher Coutinho, holistic health coach and wellness expert, and made the Centre, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM), several Union ministries, NITI Aayog, and the governments of Delhi, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Maharashtra as parties. It said the current air pollution crisis has reached proportions of a "public health emergency", violating citizens' fundamental right to life and health under Article 21 of the Constitution. Similar violations are cited in the plea for Kolkata, Lucknow, and others.

The plea sought a direction to make NCAP targets binding with "statutory force, including clear timelines, measurable indicators, and enforceable penalties for non-compliance". In Delhi alone, 2.2 million schoolchildren have already suffered irreversible lung damage, as confirmed by government and medical studies, the plea alleged. *—PTI*

Betting app: Raina, Dhawan's ₹11 cr assets seized

NEW DELHI, 6 NOV

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday said it has attached assets worth Rs 11.14 crore of former cricketers Shikhar Dhawan and Suresh Raina as part of a money-laundering probe linked to an alleged illegal betting site, involving an amount of more than Rs 1,000 crore.

A provisional order has been issued under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) to attach a commercial land in Delhi of Dhawan, 39, worth Rs 4.5 crore and a mutual fund of Raina, 38, worth Rs 6.64 crore in the case against online betting site 1xBet, the federal agency said.

The ED's probe has found that the former cricketers "knowingly" entered into endorsement agreements with foreign entities for the promotion of 1xBet and its surrogates.

"These endorsements were made in return for payments routed through foreign entities to conceal the illicit origin of the funds, which are linked to proceeds of crime generated from illegal betting activities," the agency alleged in a statement.

The ED, sources told PTI, considers the two assets as "proceeds of crime" of illegal betting.

This ED order can be appealed against before the Adjudicating Authority of the PMLA and other legal forums.

There were no immediate comments from the two former cricketers. *—PTI*

TERRORISED BENGALURU

Techie held for hoax bomb threats to schools in 4 states

BENGALURU, 6 NOV

The Bengaluru police has taken into custody a robotics engineer lodged in the Ahmedabad Central Jail in Gujarat and questioned her in connection with hoax bomb threat emails to schools.

Rene Joshilda, 30, was earlier arrested by the Gujarat cyber police after she allegedly sent an email suggesting that she was responsible for the 12 June Air India plane crash in Ahmedabad that killed 241 people on board and others. The Bengaluru police handed her back to the Gujarat police after questioning.

During the interrogations,

she admitted to sending hoax bomb threat mails to institutions in the city, Mysuru, Gujarat and Chennai.

In Bengaluru, Joshilda faces six cases of sending hoax bomb threats, including one to a public school on 14 June. She was also booked for sending a similar threat to the BJ Medical College in Udupi.

The accused had reportedly installed virtual private network services and was using an app called Gate Code to obtain new numbers virtually. She was using six or seven WhatsApp numbers on the darknet, police said.

The Chennai based engineer had sent the threat mails with the intention of framing a man who had betrayed her to marry another woman.

She allegedly sent threatening emails to the Geneva Liberal School in Gujarat and Divya Jyoti School in Bhopal apart from sending 13 threats to the Narendra Modi Stadium. *—Agencies*

HC BINS SHAH BANO'S DAUGHTER'S PLEA AGAINST 'HAQ'

INDORE, 6 NOV

The Madhya Pradesh High Court has dismissed a petition filed by the daughter of Shah Bano Begum, whose legal battle to get alimony from ex-husband became a landmark case, seeking a stay on the release of Hindi film 'Haq', holding that it was devoid of merits

'Haq' is said to be inspired by the life and legal struggle of Shah Bano Begum, whose case in 1985 led the Supreme Court to grant divorced Muslim women the right to maintenance.

Bano died in 1992. Her daughter, Siddiqua Begum Khan, had approached the high court claiming that the film was made without the family's consent and misrepresented personal aspects of her late mother's life. *—PTI*

270 Indians who fled from Myanmar repatriated

NEW DELHI, 6 NOV

India on Thursday repatriated 270 of its nationals from Thailand in two military transport aircraft, days after they fled to Thai border town of Mae Sot from a notorious scam centre in Myanmar following a crackdown on it.

Around 500 Indian nationals were among 1,500 people from 28 countries who crossed over to Thailand late last month following the raid on the cybercrime hub of KK Park in Myanmarese city of Myawaddy.

The Indian embassy in Bangkok said the Thai government has facilitated repatriation of 270 Indian nationals, including 26 women, from Mae Sot to India by two special flights operated by Indian Air Force. These Indian nationals recently crossed into Thailand from Myawaddy, where they were allegedly working in the cyber scam-centres, it said on social media.

The Indians were detained by Thai authorities for violation of the country's immigration laws when they had entered it illegally, the Indian mission said. India is expected to operate more flights on Friday to bring back the remaining Indians. *—PTI*

1 of 91 underfed kids rehabilitated in Mysuru

MYSURU, 6 NOV

Only one of the 91 severely malnourished children identified in Mysuru district has been admitted to the government's rehabilitation unit, a revelation that prompted sharp criticism from Karnataka State Commission for Protection of Child Rights chairperson Shashidhar Kusumbe during his inspection at Cheluvamba Hospital on Thursday. Kusumbe reprimanded district officials for the "alarming negligence", pointing out that despite full government provisioning, 90 children had still not been brought in for treatment. He directed authorities to immediately admit all remaining children, ensure they receive proper medical care and nutritional support, and submit an action-taken report within three days. He said that severe malnutrition leads to stunting, low energy, poor growth and long-term health complications, and warned officials that any further delay in rehabilitating the identified children would not be tolerated in any manner. —*Salar News*

Dharwad bans entry of seer till January 2026

DHARWAD, 6 NOV

The Dharwad district administration has imposed restrictions on the entry of Sri Adrushya Kadasiddheshwara Swamiji of Kanneri Mutt from 5 November to 3 January, 2026, citing possible threats to public peace. The order, issued by District Collector Divya Prabhu, invoked Section 163(1), (2), and (3) of the Indian Civil Protection Act, 2023, granting the administration powers to prevent potential disturbances to law and order. Officials said the move followed objections raised by leaders of the Global Lingayat Mahasabha, who had petitioned the Deputy Commissioner against the seer's planned visit to Annigeri in Dharwad on 7 November. In response, the administration imposed the restriction both from and within Dharwad district limits, effectively barring the Swamiji's participation in public events there. Authorities described the action as a precautionary measure, aimed at maintaining communal harmony in the district. —*Salar News*

13 nations attend Mysuru conference on heatwave

MYSURU, 6 NOV

Heatwaves are a public health emergency, CG Betsurmath, executive Secretary of JSS Mahavidyapeetha said at a two-day international conference on Heat and Heatwave trends and their health implications in the global south' in Mysuru, which hosted delegates from 13 countries. The conference was jointly organised by JSS Science and Technology University (JSS STU), NAM S&T Centre, and SCOPE at RP Singhania Auditorium at its premises on Thursday. Betsurmath said that prolonged exposure to high temperatures cause physiological stress, increase the mortality rate of various diseases, and disrupts economies. According to the Karnataka Heat Wave Action Plan 2024–25, 15 of the state's 31 districts are classified as high-risk zones for heat waves triggered illnesses. —*Salar News*

HC refuses to lift stay on order limiting public events

Court asks govt why stop people from walking together

BENGALURU, 6 NOV

High Court on Thursday dismissed the State government's appeal challenging a single judge's interim stay on its order requiring private organisations to obtain prior permission for any activity held in government-owned spaces. A division bench of Justices SG Pandit and Geetha KB directed the State to approach the single judge to seek vacation of the stay instead of filing an appeal.

The single judge had stayed the 18 October government order (GO), which states that any programme or procession held without prior permission would be treated as an "unlawful assembly" under the Bharatiya Nyaya Samhita (BNS). Though the GO does not name the RSS, it is widely viewed as targeting its route marches.

During the hearing, the bench questioned whether gatherings of ten or more people could automatically be categorised as unlawful. "If people wish to walk together, can that be stopped?" the court asked.

Advocate-General Shashi Kiran Shetty argued that the GO regulates organised events, not casual gatherings, and is meant to safeguard public property. He said the State had already limited protests to Freedom Park and major events to Kanteerava Stadium.

Senior advocate Ashok Haranahalli, appearing for petitioner organisations Punashchetana Seva Samsthe and We Care Foundation, contended the appeal was not maintainable and that the GO violated Article 19(1)(b), which guarantees the right to peaceful assembly. Even a group playing cricket would require daily permission under such a rule, he argued.

The GO requires permission to be sought three days in advance for any procession or rally involving over ten people moving with a common objective through government property. Government premises include land, buildings, roads, parks, playgrounds and water bodies under the control of local authorities or State bodies. Marriage and funeral gatherings are exempt.

The main petition before the single judge is listed for hearing on 17 November. —*PTI*

Union Minister Rajnath Singh *PHOTO: PTI*

Laghu Udyog Bharati was inspired from RSS: Rajnath

BENGALURU, 6 NOV

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday said Laghu Udyog Bharati (LUB) has drawn inspiration from the RSS, as he assured India's Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector full government support in helping the country become a developed nation.

Addressing the inaugural session of the seventh India Manufacturing Show (IMS 2025) virtually from the Bangalore International Exhibition Centre (BIEC), Singh said he was pleased to see that LUB — once a small organisation, "is no longer Laghu". he said, RSS played a key role in shaping the organisation. "For sure, this organisation got inspired by RSS. Their motto 'Aharnisham Sevamahe' makes it clear they want to serve day and night, just as the Sangh Parivar has served society for a century," he said, adding that he has been associated with RSS "from the beginning" and will remain so "till the end". —*PTI*

PROTEST OVER FAIR PRICE

Farmers' stir: CM to hold talk on 7 Nov; to meet PM

BENGALURU, 6 NOV

As the farmers' protest intensified in north Karnataka over sugarcane prices, Chief Minister **Siddaramaiah** on Thursday clarified that the Centre, and not the State Government, is responsible for fixing the Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) for sugarcane.

Siddaramaiah has called two meetings on Friday, one with sugar mill owners between 11am and 1pm, and another with farmer leaders from Haveri, Belagavi, Bagalkote, and Vijayapura in Bengaluru.

"The FRP fixation is done by the Centre every year, including this year on 6 May. The farmers are being misled by the opposition, which is politicising the issue," he said.

The CM said the Centre has fixed Rs 3,550 per tonne for sugarcane with a 10.25 per cent recovery rate, explaining that for every 0.1 per cent variation, Rs 3.46 is either added or deducted. If the recovery falls to 9.5 per cent or less, the effective rate becomes Rs 3,290.50 per tonne, he noted.

He said he will seek an appointment with Prime Minister Narendra Modi to discuss the farmers' agitation. —*PTI*

JD(S) URGES HIKE IN MILK INCENTIVES

MYSURU, 6 NOV

Former minister and JD(S) State Working President Sa Ra Mahesh on Thursday urged the State government to raise milk procurement incentives from Rs 5 to Rs 7 per litre after the Karnataka Milk Federation (KMF) hiked the price of Nandini ghee by Rs 90 and butter by Rs 26 per kilo, citing higher production costs.

He said while the State decided to pay the entire hike directly to farmers, incentives must also increase to offset expenses. "KMF raised ghee prices when the Union government reduced GST rates," he noted. The new prices, Rs 700 per kg for ghee and Rs 570 for butter, took effect Wednesday. Mahesh also accused the Siddaramaiah government of neglecting development projects while focusing solely on guarantee schemes. He claimed 63 per cent of State 's Rs 7.81 lakh crore debt was incurred under Siddaramaiah's two terms.

He criticised delays in local body elections, warning the state had lost grants, and urged systematic planning and funding for the proposed Greater Mysuru project. —*Salar News*

BANGALORE INT'L EXHIBITION

Visitors take a selfie during the 7th India Manufacturing Show 2025 at the Bangalore International Exhibition Centre in Bengaluru on Thursday *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

US firm to invest ₹1.5K cr in AI server near KIA

The Burkhan Group will collaborate with Gigabyte and Cera Network to set up facilities for the production of advanced CPUs, GPUs, and AI-ready network switches in Karnataka *PHOTO: PIXABAY*

BENGALURU, 6 NOV

Burkhan World Group, headquartered in Miami, USA, will invest Rs 1,500 crore in State for the production of advanced AI-powered servers, Minister for Large and Medium Industries MB Patil said on Thursday.

The company, headquartered in Miami, USA, has sought 10-15 acres of land near Devanahalli.

The investment is expected to generate significant employment opportunities in the manufacturing sector, Patil said.

Patil held detailed discussions on the proposed investment and related matters with Shafi Khan, CEO of The Ghazi Group (TGG)—a subsidiary of Burkhan World—and his team at Vidhana Soudha.

"The servers to be manufactured by Burkhan are in high demand globally, particularly for data centres, and the company also plans to export them to several countries," the minister said.

He assured the government's full cooperation for the project and directed the principal secretary to convene a meeting to subsidies and other incentives.

The Burkhan Group will collaborate with Gigabyte and Cera Network to set up facilities for the production of advanced CPUs, GPUs, and AI-ready network switches in Karnataka.

The investment by Burkhan Group would strengthen the state's ecosystem for semiconductors, AI hardware, and advanced electronics.

Patil said that Burkhan World will establish Bengaluru as its centre of excellence for operations serving India and the Europe, Middle East and Africa region.

The company also plans to launch special skill development programmes across the state. —*PTI*

KARNATAKA INKS RS 4,500 CRORE MARITIME MOUs

BIDAR, 6 NOV

Karnataka signed MoUs worth about Rs 4,500 crore at its State Convention during India Maritime Week (IMW) 2025 in Mumbai. Presided over by Fisheries, Ports and Inland Waterways Minister Mankala S Vaidya, the session focused on "Exploring PPP Synergies for a Sustainable Blue Economy" to boost connectivity, port infrastructure and skilled manpower.

Key agreements included a Rs 4,118 crore concession pact with JSW Infrastructure Ltd to develop a greenfield, all-weather deep-water port at Keni under the PPP model. A Rs 45.88-crore contract was signed with Konkan Railway Corporation Ltd for developing the Amadalli rail siding. State also inked a Rs 300 crore MoU with Inland Waterways Authority of India to develop national waterways.

Further, an agreement with National Inland Navigation Institute (NINI), Patna will establish a Rs 50 crore Centre of Excellence in Inland Water Transport and Navigation in Mangaluru. The Fisheries Department signed an MoU worth Rs 12 crore for cold storage, processing units and a testing laboratory in Ballari.

State Marine and Waterways Master Plan was also presented, outlining 126 projects totalling Rs 23,000 crore. 10 PPP projects worth over Rs 7,500 crore are ready for immediate rollout, including Mangaluru Water Metro and State's first marine logistics initiatives. —*Salar News*

Man kills daughter, dies by suicide after wife elopes

MULBAGAL, 6 NOV

In a tragic incident in Kolar district, a 32-year-old electrician allegedly killed his four-year-old daughter before taking his own life after learning that his wife had eloped with another man, police said on Thursday. The incident occurred on Wednesday at Mudiyanoor village under Mulbagal rural police limits. The deceased have been identified as Lokesh, 32 and his daughter Niharika, 4.

According to police, Lokesh's wife Navya Shree went missing from their home on Tuesday evening. After searching unsuccessfully, he lodged a missing complaint. The next morning, he reportedly discovered that she had fled with a villager named Murali, a labourer.

Distressed by the revelation Lokesh is believed to have drowned his daughter before hanging himself from a tree near a college. —*Salar News*

Karnataka State Youth Congress protests in Bengaluru's Freedom Park against the Centre and Election Commission over the alleged theft of 25 lakh votes in Haryana, on Thursday *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

REVOLUTION ONLY IN 2028 IN CONG: DKS

BENGALURU, 6 OCT

Dismissing speculation about "November revolution", Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Thursday said, there will be a revolution only in 2028 with the Congress returning to power in the state.

The State Congress President said he and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah will abide by the party's decision.

There has been speculation about the chief minister change in the state when the Congress government reaches the halfway mark of its five-year term this month, which is being referred to by some as the "November revolution".

Speaking to reporters, he said, "Reports about the Cabinet reshuffle and leadership are by you (media). Have I or the CM said anything?"

Shivakumar said the high command in Delhi will take a call on the matter. —*PTI*

AZIM PREMJI REPORT

'Shakti scheme transformed women's mobility in K'taka'

BENGALURU, 6 NOV

A study by Azim Premji University has found that Karnataka's Shakti scheme, offering free bus travel for women, has significantly reshaped mobility patterns in Bengaluru, leading to a structural shift in access to public transport.

The report, Gender, Welfare, and Mobility: Impact of Shakti Scheme on BMTC Transport Transformation, authored by economists Tamoghna Halder and Arjun Jayadev, notes that the scheme has altered "gendered patterns of access to the city." The scheme, launched on June 11, 2023 and implemented soon after the Congress government took office, allows women to travel free across Karnataka in non-luxury state-run buses.

An analysis of 2.89 crore trips on Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation buses between January 2023 and January 2025 showed that women's ridership rose 2.5 times after the scheme's introduction. Women now outnumber men on average by 60:40 on many busy routes,

including those passing through the Central Business District.

The study observes that the subsidy marginally exceeds fare revenue from non-beneficiaries but says the gap is narrow given the scale of the programme. Uptake has been strongest in northern, western and central Bengaluru, while eastern peripheries and migrant-dominated neighbourhoods lag, partly due to weaker BMTC services and the exclusion of migrant women from the scheme.

Women's ridership has also sharply increased along Metro feeder routes. Although some bus-to-Metro shifts were recorded after the Purple Line extension, Shakti beneficiaries continue to prefer buses due to zero fares.

The researchers found no significant difference in uptake between wards with high and low SC-ST populations.—*PTI*

'KGF', 'Om' fame veteran actor Harish Rai dies

BENGALURU, 6 NOV

Veteran Kannada actor **Harish Rai**, 55, best known for his performances in films like 'Om' and the 'KGF' series, has passed away after battling cancer. The actor was a respected name in South Indian cinema, having acted in Kannada, Tamil, and Telugu films over several decades.

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar took to his X account to confirm the news and express his condolences. Sharing the sad news, he wrote that the industry has lost one of its finest actors.

"The passing away of Harish Rai, the renowned villain actor of Kannada cinema, is an extremely sorrowful. The film industry has become poorer with the death of Roy, who was suffering from cancer. In films including 'Om, Hello Yama', as well as 'KGF 'and 'KGF 2', Harish Roy had acted wonderfully and attracted everyone's attention," he wrote in Kannada. —*PTI*

SALAR DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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THE BIHAR SHOWDOWN

Mamata denies receiving SIR enumeration forms

KOLKATA, 6 NOV

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday denied receiving any enumeration form for the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in the state. Calling reports of her accepting the form from a booth-level officer "false, misleading, and politically motivated," she said on Facebook that she will not fill any form until every citizen has done so. Meanwhile, the Calcutta High Court directed the Election Commission of India (ECI) to file an affidavit by 19 November on a PIL challenging the use of the 2002 voters' list for the SIR. The ECI, conducting revisions in 12 states including Bengal ahead of the 2026 Assembly polls, maintained that the petition lacks merit and is "not legally maintainable." *—PTI*

Revanth says Cong means Muslims: BJP kicks up row

HYDERABAD/JAMMU, 6 NOV

Telangana Bharatiya Janata Party chief N Ramchander Rao on Thursday criticised Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy for saying "Congress means Muslims and Muslims means Congress", accusing the party of appeasement politics ahead of the bypolls. Rao said Reddy was "frustrated" and "speaking AIMIM's language", adding that "maximum communal riots took place under Congress rule". He predicted Reddy's defeat in the Jubilee Hills bypoll. At a Hyderabad rally, Reddy had defended Congress's pro-minority stance while responding to Union Minister G Kishan Reddy's objection to former Indian team cricket captain Mohammad Azharuddin's inclusion in the Cabinet recently. *—PTI*

Search operation on for terrorists in J&K's Kishtwar

JAMMU, 6 NOV

A cordon and search operation is underway in Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar district to locate two to three terrorists believed to be hiding in a forested region, officials reported.
The operation follows an encounter between terrorists and security forces in the Chatru area on Wednesday, during which a soldier sustained injuries. Sources suggest the terrorists are likely of Pakistani origin. A senior security official stated, "The search operation is ongoing; however, there has been no exchange of fire since yesterday afternoon." This operation is supported by drones and sniffer dogs, with additional reinforcements deployed. The mountainous district has seen multiple encounters recently, emphasising the ongoing efforts against Pakistan-based terrorists. *—PTI*

Sat Paul Sharma, Gupta take oath as RS members

NEW DELHI, 6 NOV

Newly elected members of the Rajya Sabha, Rajinder Gupta and Sat Paul Sharma, were administered the oath of office by Vice President CP Radhakrishnan on Thursday. While Gupta of the Aam Aadmi Party was elected an MP from Punjab, BJP's Sharma took oath as an MP representing Jammu and Kashmir. Gupta, Gupta, the chairman emeritus of Trident Group, recently resigned as vice-chairman of the state economic policy and planning board. Sharma is the president of the Jammu and Kashmir unit of the BJP. He has earlier served as a cabinet minister in the state government. BJP President JP Nadda, Union Minister Jitendra Singh and BJP's Jammu and Kashmir in-charge, Tarun Chugh were also present. *—PTI*

PM: Cong, RJD need infiltrators to win

Says INDIA bloc don't like Lord Ram, Dalits

BHAGALPUR/ARARIA, 6 NOV

Prime Minister Narendra Modi claimed that the INDIA bloc was protecting "infiltrators" for "vote bank" politics as he called upon Bihar to vote for the ruling NDA.

"The NDA is committed to driving out each and every infiltrator from the country. But the Congress-RJD offer them protection, take out political yatras in their favour and come up with misleading narratives," alleged the PM in an indirect reference to Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi's 'Voter Adhikar Yatra' and allegations of "vote theft". "Whenever the RJD-Congress achieve power, they try to give back-door entry to infiltrators. They do so because of vote bank politics. But this takes a toll on the people of this country. The infiltrators claim a share in all that belongs to the citizens."

Addressing back-to-back rallies in Bhagalpur and Araria districts, Modi alleged that that the Opposition bloc "dislikes" Lord Ram and 'Chhathi Maiya'.

He alleged that they were reluctant to visit Ayodhya to have 'darshan' of shrines dedicated to Nishad Raj, Mata Shabri and Maharshi Valmiki. This was indicative of their "hatred" for Dalits and backward classes, he said.

Modi reiterated that 'katta' (country-made weapons), 'kroorta' (cruelty), 'katuta' (bitterness), 'kushasan' (misgovernance) and corruption were the hallmarks of the 15-year-long "jungle raj".

"In the curriculum of RJD, a stands for 'apharan' (kidnapping), f for 'firauti' (ransom) and p for 'parivarvaad' (dynasty rule)." *—PTI*
He called upon voters to cast their ballots for Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. *—PTI*

> **Prime Minister Narendra Modi established Makhana Board... if 'Lalu & co' come to power, 'infiltrator ghusao board' will be set up**
>
> -Amit Shah, Union Home Minister

RaGa: Youth must end Bihar vote chori

Says BJP will try to steal Bihar like Haryana

PURNEA/ GUWAHATI/ NAGPUR, 6 NOV

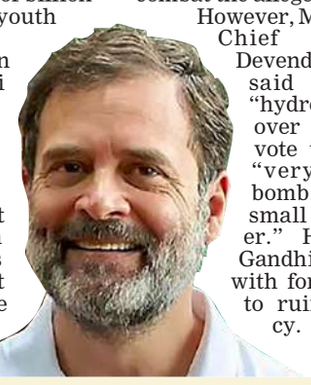
It is the responsibility of the youth to prevent the BJP from "stealing votes", Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said.

Addressing a poll rally in Purnea, Bihar, on Thursday, Gandhi claimed that the BJP was winning elections by "stealing votes".

"We have shown the entire world that the BJP and the Election Commission have stolen the Haryana election. I am sure that they would try to steal votes in Bihar, too," he said. "It is the responsibility of Bihar's youth to put a stop to this, and save the Constitution... All of you need to be cautious at the polling booths."

> **If a roti is not flipped on a tawa (pan), it gets burnt. Twenty years is a long time. A Tejashwi government is essential to build a new Bihar**
>
> -Lalu Prasad, RJD President

Gandhi also alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi wants a "rule of billionaires where the youth remain jobless".



At another rally in Araria, Gandhi accused Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah of imposing "'jungle raj". "Nitish Kumar talks about 'jungle raj' in Bihar... But, it is the PM and Amit Shah who have imposed 'jungle raj' in Delhi, in the entire country, which is witnessing the rule of the ED, CBI, IT, hatred and unemployment. This is the true 'jungle raj'," he asserted.

Meanwhile, Deputy Leader of Congress in the Lok Sabha Gaurav Gogoi called for a "national movement" to combat the alleged vote theft.

However, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said Gandhi's "hydrogen bomb" over the alleged vote theft was a "very weak bomb. It was a small firecracker." He accused Gandhi of working with foreign forces to ruin democracy. *—PTI*

Are people being blocked from voting?

The RJD posted a video in which a voter claims that the Vaishali district administration has stopped the operation of vehicles heading to Raghopur via the 6-lane bridge and boats from Kaccha Dargah. This is expected to depriving hundreds of voters in Raghoopur of their voting rights.

A video showed police entering households, beating people and threatening voters. In the video on X, a voice says "They are telling us to vote for the BJP, otherwise we will be beaten up. He has attacked a person."

Factchecker Mohammed Zubair posted pictures purportedly showing people voting in two places: He showed a Santosh Jha and Nagendra Kumar voting in the February Delhi elections as well as in Bihar ***PHOTO: @zoo_bear***

Muzaffarpur mystery

Three citizens alleged that when they went to vote in Sahibganj constituency in Muzaffarpur district, their votes where already cast. The video, which the RJD reposted at 12pm, showed the three citizens frustrated. However, the Election Commission of Bihar replied to the video at 1.52pm, showing them having voted.

Digha

In Patna's Digha constituency, several women were initially denied their right to vote because of missing printed voter slips. Despite possessing valid digital IDs and being listed on the electoral roll, these women were barred from voting. Booth officials violated ECI guidelines that make slips non-mandatory, instead EPIC or Aadhaar can be used. Only after outrage they were allowed to vote.

RJD chief Lalu Prasad Yadav, wife Rabri Devi, and son and CM candidate Tejashwi Yadav; YouTuber 'Khan sir'; JDU Chief Nitish Kumar; citizens after casting their votes in Bihar on Thursday ***PHOTO: PTI***

'Polling slowed in Oppn's dens'

>>>CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The first phase of the Bihar Assembly elections saw widespread allegations, even as the state recorded its highest-ever voter turnout. RJD alleged on X that voting had been "deliberately slowed down" in areas where the INDIA bloc enjoys strong support, a charge the Election Commission rejected.

Multiple regions witnessed voting boycotts over long-pending civic grievances.

In Siwan, Piprahi residents refused to vote at booths 56–57 under the slogan "No Booth, No Vote", while voters at booths 311–312 in Daraunda boycotted polling over the absence of a bridge. In Muzaffarpur, three Kudhni polling stations (113–115) saw a boycott over the demand for a cremation ground, and voters in Gayghat stayed away from booths 161, 162 and 170 seeking road and bridge construction.

Voters wait in a line at a polling station at Hajipur in Vaishali on Thursday ***PHOTO: PTI***

In Aurai, residents at booth 86 refused to vote citing the failure to rehabilitate families displaced by dam construction. Darbhanga's Kusheshwarsthan area saw polling halted at booths 284–287 due to protests over incomplete roads.

In a positive contrast, voting took place for the first time in 20 years in Naxal-hit Bhimband village, Munger, where residents credited security forces for restoring peace. *—Salar News*

Ajit Pawar's son linked to Rs 300 crore land scam

PUNE, 6 NOV

The Maharashtra Revenue Department has suspended a sub-registrar over a Rs 300-crore land deal allegedly involving Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar's son Parth Pawar and set up a committee to investigate the transaction, an official said on Thursday.

According to the official, 40 acres of "Mahar Vatan land belonging to the government" was sold to Amadea Enterprises LLP, in which Parth Pawar is a partner, for Rs 300 crore, and the stamp duty on it was waived. Government land cannot be sold to a private firm.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said orders have been given to conduct a probe as "the issue appears serious", even as the Opposition targeted the ruling Mahayuti, comprising the BJP, Ajit Pawar's NCP and Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena, over it.

- 40 acres of government land was sold to Amadea Enterprises LLP, in which Parth Pawar is a partner, for Rs 300 crore

A land parcel in Pune's upmarket Mundhwa area was allegedly purchased for about Rs 300 crore by a company linked to Parth Pawar despite its market rate being "considerably higher", RTI activist Vijay Kumbhar said. He also claimed that "the stamp duty of Rs 21 crore on this deal was waived".

Sources in the revenue department claimed that on the '7/12 extract', a key property document, the land is in the name of 'Mumbai Sarkar'.

"The property cards show the name of the owners, who sold it to the private firm," they said.

The Opposition flayed the ruling alliance on all fronts. Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Ambadas Danve claimed that the land was worth Rs 1,800 crore *—PTI*

RAHUL'S H-FILES

Showing me as Indian to scam people: Brazilian model

NEW DELHI, 6 NOV

The Brazilian model whose photo Congress leader Rahul Gandhi claimed appeared multiple times on Haryana's voter list reportedly responded to the "vote chori" allegations.

"Ah! they are portraying me as Indian to scam people, guys. What madness!" the woman, Larissa Nery said in Portuguese. ""Guys, they are using an old photo of mine. It is an old photo, okay? I was young in the photo, I was like 18 or 20 years old.... I do not know if it is an election or something about voting that you have to vote for."

Congress leader and the party's social media head, Supriya Shrinate, shared a video of the Nery purportedly reacting to her image going viral.

Gandhi had showed the image at his press conference on Wednesday and claimed that it was used 22 times at 10 booths in the Rai Assembly constituency of Haryana, with names such as "Seema, Sweety and Saraswati" on the electoral list.

Gandhi said a "centralised plan" included a Brazilian model whose photograph was used 22 times at 10 booths in the Rai constituency during last year's Haryana Assembly polls, using names such as "Seema, Sweety and Saraswati".

"If you just scan (a QR code that was shown on a screen with the image of the Brazilian woman) that, which I will do just now, if you scan that, this opens. That is her official page," he said at the presser.

Since the press conference, the Brazilian woman's photograph has gone viral, with intense speculation about her identity, profession and whereabouts. A number of memes and satirical posts are also doing the rounds of social media, using her image. *—PTI*

PHOTO: WIKICOMMONS

Non-cognisable case booked for threats to Ayyub

THANE, 6 NOV

Navi Mumbai police have registered a non-cognisable offence after journalist Rana Ayyub reported receiving death threats via WhatsApp from an unknown international number, officials said. Ayyub, who writes for The Washington Post and lives in Navi Mumbai, received repeated calls on 2 November from a number identified as 'Harry Shooter Canada'. When she did not respond, the caller allegedly sent threatening messages demanding she write an article on the 1984 anti-Sikh riots and the killers of Indira Gandhi, warning that she and her father would be harmed. Police at Koparkhairne station registered the case under Section 351(4) (criminal intimidation) of the BNS. Arrests require a court warrant in such cases. *—PTI*

MP: Power utility awards Rs 15L for reporting theft

JABALPUR, 6 NOV

State-owned Madhya Pradesh Poorv Kshetra Vidyut Vitaran Company Limited (MPPKVVCL) rewarded citizens over Rs 15.5 lakh in 100 days for reporting power theft and irregularities through its 'V-Mitra' app, officials said. Since its launch, around 30,000 complaints have been lodged, with 17,200 verified and 3,850 cases confirming irregularities, said PRO Pankaj Swami. Rewards were directly credited to the bank accounts of people in 3,150 verified cases, avoiding office visits. The company raised Rs 4.64 crore in bills against offenders, recovering Rs 23 lakh, and imposed penalties worth Rs 3.25 lakh on erring staff. Additionally, 3,100 applications for new power connections and load enhancements were processed through the app. *—PTI*

Man who sexually assaulted minor held after 24 years

T'PURAM, 6 NOV

A man accused of sexually assaulting a minor girl in Thiruvananthapuram in 2001 and evading arrest for nearly 24 years has been caught in Chennai, police said. The accused, Muthukumar of Neeramankara, was a tuition teacher who allegedly lured the victim to his house during school hours and assaulted her. Though arrested at the time, he later absconded after securing bail. Police traced him after renewed efforts to review old cases, monitoring over 150 phone numbers and 30 bank accounts linked to his relatives. Muthukumar, who had converted to Christianity and assumed the name Sam, was working as a pastor in Ayanavaram. He was arrested on Wednesday and remanded in judicial custody. *—PTI*

Zubeen case: Accused Assam CIC's brother quits

GUWAHATI, 6 NOV

Assam Chief Information Commissioner Bhaskar Jyoti Mahanta resigned on Thursday after his brother, Shyamkanu Mahanta, was arrested over singer Zubeen Garg's mysterious death in Singapore. In a Facebook post, the former DGP said his conscience compelled him to step down after an RTI sought details of government funds linked to his brother. He stated that although the applicant trusted his integrity, he wished to avoid any public doubt. Garg died on 19 September while attending the North East India Festival organised by Shyamkanu. Seven people, including Garg's cousin and manager, are in custody. The case is being probed by the Assam CID's SIT, a judicial commission, and the Singapore Police Force. *—PTI*

SC rebukes Centre over Tribunal reforms delay

CJI Gavai slams Centre for last-minute deferment request

NEW DELHI, 6 NOV

The Supreme Court on Thursday expressed strong displeasure over Centre's request, seeking to adjourn the hearing on petitions challenging the constitutional validity of the Tribunals Reforms (Rationa lisation and Conditions of Service) Act, 2021.

The law, which replaced and restructured several appellate tribunals, had earlier faced judicial scrutiny for curtailing tenure and affecting judicial independence.

A bench led by Chief Justice BR Gavai sharply criticised the Centre's last-minute adjournment plea, made through Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati on behalf of Attorney General R Venkataramani, citing international arbitration commitments.

"Very unfair to the court," the CJI remarked, noting that the bench had kept Friday free to conclude the hearings and draft its judgment.

The court questioned why another law officer could not appear, observing that such requests reflected poorly on the government's commitment to the judicial process. "You have a battery of competent ASGs," the CJI said, warning that if the Attorney General failed to appear, the matter would be closed and judgment reserved.

Earlier, the Centre had urged the bench to refer the matter to a Constitution Bench, prompting the court to caution against 'delaying tactics' and emphasise judicial time constraints.

Final arguments by the petitioners, including the Madras Bar Association, were already completed, with senior advocate Arvind Datar leading the submissions.

The 2021 Act, which mirrors provisions struck down in an earlier ordinance, reduces tribunal members' tenure and alters appointment norms.

The top court had previously ruled that shorter tenures undermine judicial independence and that reintroducing identical clauses without addressing constitutional flaws was impermissible. The bench will hear petitioner submissions on Friday and, if possible, conclude the Attorney General's arguments on Monday before reserving the verdict for pronouncement later. *—PTI*

"Very unfair to the court," the CJI remarked, noting that the bench had kept Friday free to conclude the hearings **PHOTO: FREEPIK**

NEW BOMBAY HC SHOULD BE TEMPLE OF JUSTICE: CJI

Chief Justice of India Bhushan Gavai said the upcoming Bombay High Court complex should be a "temple of justice, not a seven-star hotel." Speaking at the foundation ceremony in Bandra, he stressed the building must reflect democratic and constitutional values, not imperial grandeur. "Judges are no longer feudal lords; we serve citizens," he noted. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis assured the Rs 4,000-crore project would be AI-enabled, timely, and complement the existing historic HC structure. *—PTI*

ALL BOOKED

20 women clash with cops for pooja at mausoleum in UP

FATEHPUR, 6 NOV

A group of women carrying diyas and other material tried to perform pooja at a disputed mausoleum site on Kartik Purnima, clambering over barricades and clashing with police when they were stopped.

Police registered an FIR against 20 women after the clashes on 5 November, with tension flaring up once again over the centuries-old Nawab Abu Samad mausoleum.

On 11 August, members of Hindu rightwing outfits had allegedly demanded permission to offer prayers there, claiming the structure to be a temple of 'Thakurji' with a 'Shivling'.

They alleged that the mausoleum was constructed after demolishing an ancient temple.

Videos showed vandalism and hoisting of a saffron flag at the site, triggering communal tension in the area. The district administration had sealed the premises.

On 5 November an argument ensued between the women and station house officer Tarkeshwar Rai, during which the women accused the police of misconduct and preventing them from offering their prayers.

Unable to reach the disputed spot, the women eventually performed their prayers and aarti from a nearby lane, facing the structure.

A case was registered at the Kotwali Police Station on the basis of a complaint lodged by police constable Manju Singh.

However, no arrests have been made in the matter and heavy police force has been deployed in the area. Officials said the matter is sub judice and strict directives were given to prevent any activity that could possibly disturb public order or any unwanted situation. *—PTI*

- Unable to reach the disputed spot, the group of women eventually performed their prayers and aarti from a nearby lane, facing the structure

Left Unity sweeps JNUSU polls, defeats ABVP

NEW DELHI, 6 NOV

The Left Unity on Thursday retained its stronghold in Jawaharlal Nehru University, sweeping all four central panel posts in the students' union elections.

The alliance of the All India Students' Association (AISA), Students' Federation of India (SFI) and Democratic Students' Federation (DSF) reaffirmed its dominance on campus.

Aditi Mishra was elected president, defeating RSS-backed ABVP's Vikas Patel by 449 votes.

Kizhakoot Gopika Babu won the vice-president's post over Tanya Kumari, while Sunil Yadav and Danish Ali secured the general secretary and joint secretary posts, defeating ABVP's Rajeshwar Kant Dubey and Anuj, respectively.

Around 9,043 students were eligible to vote, with a 67 per cent turnout — slightly below the previous election's 70 per cent.

The campus witnessed energetic participation with students queuing up outside hostels amid chants, drums and campaign songs.

The results mark a setback for the ABVP, which last year made a comeback when Vaibhav Meena won the joint secretary post — its first in a decade. Earlier, Saurabh Sharma's 2015 victory had ended a 14-year drought for the outfit.

With this year's outcome, the Left Unity has reasserted its political dominance, continuing its long tradition of leadership in the JNU -- a campus often seen as a cradle of debate, dissent and student activism. *—Agencies*

Gurugaon AQI touches toxic '700' mark

NEW DELHI, 6 NOV

The air across Delhi-NCR plunged to "hazardous" levels on Thursday, with Gurugram's AQI touching 700 at 8.30am and Delhi's reaching 705, according to AQI.in. Several residents shared screenshots showing AQI levels above 800, demanding school closures and a health emergency. The pollution level in Gurugram was likened to smoking nearly 10 cigarettes a day.

Delhi's worst-hit zones included Burari, Anand Vihar, Aerocity and Bawana. The Decision Support System attributed 16.8 per cent of Delhi's pollution to vehicular emissions and 44 per cent to unidentified sources. Stubble burning added to the crisis, with 94 cases in Punjab, 13 in Haryana and 74 in Uttar Pradesh.

Noida recorded an AQI above 600, while Jaipur's stood at 180, categorised as "unhealthy." Meanwhile, Delhi Traffic Police penalised over 4.87 lakh motorists this year for lacking valid Pollution Under Control certificates, a 20 per cent rise from 2024. Authorities said enforcement under GRAP has intensified, with checks barring entry of high-emission vehicles. *—Agencies*

A Delhi Metro train passes by while vehicles ply on a road amid smog, in Gurugram, Haryana, on Thursday **PHOTO: PTI**

RAMDEV RAPPED

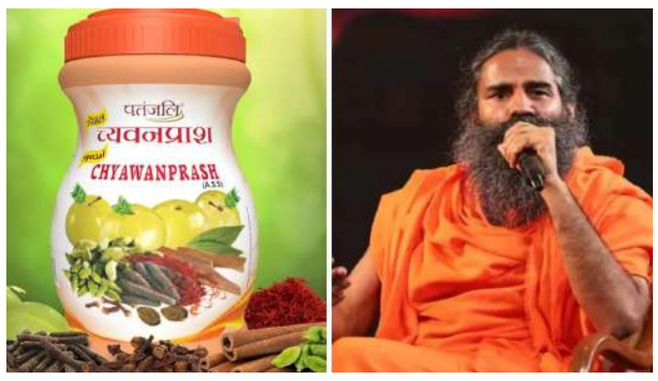
How is chyawanprash 'dhokha': HC

MEERUT, 6 NOV

The Delhi High Court on Thursday questioned Patanjali Ayurved for calling rival chyawanprash products "dhoka" (fraud) in an advertisement, asking how such a term could describe competitors' goods.

Justice Tejas Karia said yoga guru Ramdev's Patanjali may claim superiority but cannot disparage others. The court reserved its order on Dabur India's plea seeking an injunction against the ad, which it termed "disparaging."

Patanjali's counsel, senior advocate Rajiv Nayar, argued that "dhoka" was used to mean "ordinary" or "ineffective," not fraudulent. "When I say dhoka, I mean others are ordinary," he said. The 25-second ad titled "51 herbs. 1 truth. Patanjali Chyawanprash!" shows a woman saying, "Chalo dhoka khao," followed by Ramdev's line, "Adhikansh log chyawanprash ke naam par dhoka kha rahe hain." Dabur's counsel, senior advocate Sandeep Sethi, argued that the phrase implied consuming "fraud products," hurting Dabur, which holds over 60 per cent of the chyawanprash market. "Coming from a yoga guru, it's a big claim," he said. *—PTI*



Justice Tejas Karia said Ramdev's Patanjali may claim superiority but cannot disparage others **PHOTO: SCREENGRAB**

Admiral Tripathi commissions INS Ikshak in Kochi

KOCHI, 6 NOV

Navy Chief Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi on Thursday commissioned INS Ikshak, the third indigenously built Survey Vessel (Large), at Kochi. Calling it a milestone in India's shipbuilding, he said the vessel boosts naval self-reliance and regional capability.

Quoting PM Narendra Modi, he said India is "well poised to be a steady lighthouse" amid maritime turbulence.

Built by GRSE Kolkata, the 110-metre, 3,400-tonne Ikshak can reach 18 knots and conduct deep-sea surveys up to 11,000metres.

Equipped for disaster relief and hospital duties, Ikshak carries advanced mapping systems and autonomous vehicles. *—PTI*

Mumbai builder booked in Rs 100 cr housing scam

MUMBAI, 6 NOV

Mumbai police have registered a case against real estate developer Subbaraman Anand Vilaynur, his wife Uma Subbaraman, and others for allegedly cheating homebuyers of Rs 100 crore in a housing project, officials said on Thursday.

According to the Economic Offences Wing (EOW), the accused, along with BP Gangar Constructions, collected money from 102 buyers since 2018 for the Sky 31 project in Wadala (West), promising each a flat. However, the funds were allegedly diverted to personal and other bank accounts instead of being used for construction.

The complaint, filed by 62-year-old Chartered Accountant Anil Dron from Kandivali, also claimed that the accused sold one flat to two buyers, duping both.

Following a preliminary inquiry, the EOW registered a case under charges of cheating and criminal breach of trust. The investigation is underway. *—PTI*

6,000 INMATES IN TN CAMPUS

Two held for placing camera in Tata women's hostel washroom

KRISHNAGIRI, 6 NOV

A woman and her male friend from Bengaluru were arrested on a charge of installing a hidden camera in a bathroom of a women's hostel in Nagamangalam in Tamil Nadu's Hosur.

Hundreds of women employees of the Tata Electronics Pvt Ltd facility at Nagamangalam in Krishnagiri district staged a protest after a hidden camera was discovered inside a bathroom in the company's hostel named Vidiyal Residency. The 11th floor structure houses over 6,000 women.

Neelukumari Gupta from Odisha, who was an employee of the company's facility, had stayed at the hostel. She had installed the device at the instigation of her male friend, Santhosh, 25.

Santhosh was arrested by the police team from Udanapalli on 5 November.

Following the protest by the women employees, the police held discussion with them, ensuring their safety.

Women police were deployed to thoroughly check the premises to ascertain if hidden cameras were installed elsewhere. *— PTI*

Employees, staying in the Tata firm's hostel at Nagamangalam, Krishnagiri, protested after the incident **PHOTO: SCREENGRAB**

Prohibitory orders imposed in Odisha villages post clash

BHUBANESWAR, 6 NOV

The Khurda district administration in Odisha has imposed prohibitory orders following a clash between residents of two villages over a boundary dispute.

Villagers of Ostapur and Kotapalla under the Baghamari Police station limits resorted to violence on 5 November after a heated argument over the installation of a signboard marking the boundary between the two villages.

Three to four roadside shops were gutted, and several people sustained injuries during the clash.

The local administration imposed prohibitory orders under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita.

Khurda additional district magistrate Saphalya Mandita Pradhan ordered its imposition from Hanuman Batika to Barika Pokhari in Ostapur–Kotapalla area. Residents of the two villages have been directed not to open shops or assemble in public places until further orders.

In August, prohibitory orders were imposed in the same area after a similar incident of violence. Police personnel were deployed to oversee the area's law and order situation. *—PTI*

Arunachal school death: Kin alleges torture by seniors

ITANAGAR, 6 NOV

Fresh allegations have surfaced over the death of a 12-year-old student of class VII of Sainik School in Arunachal Pradesh's East Siang district, after his sister accused senior students of subjecting him to severe bullying and torture. The victim was found dead inside the school premises at Niglok on 1 November. Miss Arunachal 2024, Tadu Lunia, claimed the family was informed that her brother had died by suicide. However, dormitory mates revealed a group of senior students had taken him to the class 10 dormitory on 31 October. He was also branded a "thief" over a missing book and threatened with public humiliation. Meanwhile, the police have detained eight students. *—PTI*

THE GHOST CITY OF GAZA

Buildings destroyed by the Israeli military are in ruins in the Shijaiya neighborhood of Gaza City, during an army-organised tour for journalists on Wednesday
PHOTO: PTI

Bihar voters push through flooded roads to cast vote

Far from the election campaigns and high-decibel claims of political parties, the first phase of Bihar polls on Thursday captured both the grit of voters and the gaps that successive governments have failed to plug.

In Darbhanga's Kusheshwar Asthan constituency, voters braved flooded roads and difficult terrains to cast their votes, many with their children in tow.

"What is this? This is water! If someone breaks a leg or gets hurt, who will accept the responsibility?" an agitated voter told PTI Video.

"People fall, get injured, and yet nothing is done. There's no arrangement for drainage. They come asking for votes first, but when will they be ready to fix the roads?," he asked.

Residents claimed that bricks had been hurriedly placed just a day earlier to create a semblance of a pathway.

"When they needed votes, they laid these bricks here. Otherwise, people used to wade through water to reach here," remarked another elector in Bhojpuri.

Behind the frustration lies a deeper pain: the story of migration, running like a fault line through the region. Entire villages depend on sons working in Delhi, Punjab or beyond.

"There are a lot of problems. Our sons go to Delhi and Punjab to work, and there is no one who cares. If the government provided some employment here, they would stay here in the village," said a voter.

"We have no income, not a single bigha. Whether we stay here or go outside, there is nothing to eat. What can we do? If the government created jobs, our children would remain here."

But while some voters battled floods, others celebrated the end of a long wait.

In Munger's Bhimbandh, part of the Naxal-hit Tarapur seat, residents queued up with visible relief and excitement as a polling booth had finally returned to their village after 20 years.

The booth, officials said, was shifted elsewhere after a deadly 2005 incident in which seven police personnel were killed. Security concerns and the surrounding forest terrain kept the voting centre away for two decades.

"In 2005, we heard an incident took place in Tarapur where seven police personnel were killed. Since then, voting here had stalled. The voting arrangements were made somewhere else. This time, the arrangements here are good. CRPF personnel are alert, patrolling has been organised, and voting is peaceful. There are 374 voters here," senior magistrate Ashok Kumar told reporters.

For elderly voter Vishnu Dev Singh, it was a moment heavy with memory.

"I had voted here in 2005 or before that. After that, for 20 years, we used to vote at a booth outside the village because of forest and Naxal problem. Today, it feels good to vote again here in my village," he told PTI.

Women in the village recalled the hardship of the earlier trek.

"When I was working, I had to cross the forest to go and vote in Gaighat. It was very difficult. We had to take a vehicle for a certain distance and walk the rest," said Neelam Devi. "This time, the booth is closer, and the arrangements are good."

As political parties spar over development claims and accuse each other of neglect, the images from the ground in Phase 1 of polls — drenched slippers, makeshift brick pathways, security personnel posted deep inside forests — offer a reminder that the stakes for ordinary citizens remain far more fundamental: roads, safety, work, and the basic dignity that comes with being heard. *—PTI*

Voters wait in a queue to cast votes at a polling station during the first phase of the Bihar Assembly elections, in Patna, Thursday
PHOTO: PTI

Kumhrar voters seek garbage-free roads

Heaps of garbage lay strewn in front of a polling station in the Kumhrar Assembly constituency here as voters, from a 19-year-old first-timer to a 92-year-old veteran doctor, queued up to cast their ballots on Thursday. Several voters, whether young or old, in Patrakar Nagar area in the state capital Patna, spoke of the dire condition of roads and the "very poor level of sanitation" in the streets. As they waited for their turn to cast their ballot, a hope burned in their hearts that the next MLA would be sensitive to the rundown infrastructure. Kumhrar, named after the ruins of the ancient city of Pataliputra, has been known to be a BJP bastion since the 1990s, and the electorate predominantly comprises members of the Kayastha community. *—PTI*

SALAR ساہر

WB SIR: BLOs face heaps of questions from voters

As the SIR of the electoral rolls began in West Bengal, booth level officers (BLOs) are facing myriad questions from voters – when they would visit a house, how people staying abroad could be enumerated, what would happen to those born after 2002, and the like.

The Election Commission has entrusted BLOs with the task of visiting houses under their designated areas and verifying the credentials of voters, based on the rolls of 2002 when the last SIR was conducted in the state.

In Naktala-Baishnabghata belt under Tollygunge assembly seat in Kolkata, the phone of the BLO keeps ringing, and he responds to the anxious calls of voters.

"I can visit your residence only after one and a half weeks as your serial number is beyond 1300. We are now at serial number 400 only. Please call me by the end of next week," the BLO is heard telling an anxious resident.

"You enrolled only two years ago. Don't worry, your name would not be left out," he tried to calm the voter who got his name registered in 2023 and voted in the Lok Sabha polls next year.

Walking in the maze of lanes and by-lanes, the BLO, who refused to be named, told the accompanying PTI correspondent that in the first three days since 4 November, he has been able to distribute enumeration forms to 300 households.

In the next house, he encountered 70-year old Prabir Sen, whose son and daughter are living abroad. He was worried as none of his children would be able to return by 4 December, the last date for submission of enumeration forms.

"They can submit it online. They can download it from the EC website after filling up particulars like the part number of the booth, EPIC number etc. I will get back to you; please note down my mobile no," the BLO said.

Bharatiya Janata Majdoor Trade Union Council members take part in a protest against SIR, in Kolkata, on Thursday
PHOTO: PTI

Balaram Paul, 50, and his wife Monobina of Baishnabghata had a different problem. One of their children was born after 2002, and the other was only a few years old that year.

The parents were anxious about whether they would encounter any problem.

The BLO assured them: "Your children will not face any threat; they had voted in the last assembly and Lok Sabha polls, and your names feature in the 2002 voters list."

At another house on DPP Road, 49-year-old Anushila Dasgupta said she had voted in the 2002 elections in north Kolkata's Kamarhati and shifted to the south Kolkata neighbourhood six years back. Her problem is that she cannot trace her name in the 2002 electoral rolls in the Kamarhati assembly seat after logging in to the ECI website.

"We have to enquire why the list of 2002 in Kamarhati is showing incomplete. But given that you have voted in subsequent elections in either Kamarhati or Tollygunge. Your parents' names are there in the 2002 voter list. So you need not worry," the BLO said.

The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) also appears to be a great leveler. From a retired army colonel to a taxi driver, from a home maker to a house maid – all could be seen in a queue at a Trinamool Congress camp set up to help people know more about the exercise.

"People are asking many questions. Some enquired if senior citizen's cards or Swasthya Sathi (health insurance) documents could work as identity proof. We are referring to the 11 listed documents as stated by the EC," Sabyasachi Basu, a local TMC activist, said.

The CEO's office said 1.1 crore enumeration forms have been distributed up to 8pm on 5 November. *—PTI*

A BLO, who refused to be named, told the accompanying PTI correspondent that in the first three days since 4 November, he has been able to distribute enumeration forms to 300 households
PHOTO: PTI

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

UN climate summit COP30 kicks off with hopes despite US absence

World leaders descending on the United Nations annual climate summit in Brazil this week will not need to see much more than the view from their airplane window to sense the unfathomable stakes.

Surrounding the coastal city of Belem is an emerald green carpet festooned with winding rivers. But the view also reveals barren plains: some 17 per cent of the Amazon's forest cover has vanished in the past 50 years, swallowed up for farmland, logging and mining.

Often called the "lungs of the world" for its capacity to absorb vast quantities of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas that warms the planet, the biodiverse Amazon rainforest has been increasingly choked by wildfires and cleared by cattle ranching.

It is here on the edge of the world's largest tropical rainforest that Brazil's President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva hopes to convince world powers to mobilise enough funds to halt the ongoing destruction of climate-stabilising tropical rainforests in danger around the world and make progress on other critical climate goals.

Organisers are hoping this year's Conference of Parties — known less formally as COP30 — will yield commitments of money and action to support the goals laid out at previous such meetings, billing it as the "Implementation COP."

But they'll have to overcome reduced participation from the world's biggest emitters as the heads of the world's three biggest polluters — China, the US and India — will be notably absent. These tensions are on display as a preliminary leaders' gathering gets underway on Thursday before formal UN climate talks kick off next week.

US ABSENCE LOOMS OVER MEETING

US President Donald Trump, who withdrew US from the Paris climate accords the same day he entered office, won't send any senior officials. China will send its deputy prime minister, Ding Xuexiang.

That leaves the rest of the summit's leaders — including UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and French President Emmanuel Macron — to confront not only the consequences of an intensifying global climate crisis but a daunting set of political challenges.

Advocates and diplomats have raised concerns that the absence of the US — which has at times played a key role in convincing China to restrain carbon emissions and securing finance for poor countries — could signal a more global retreat from climate politics.

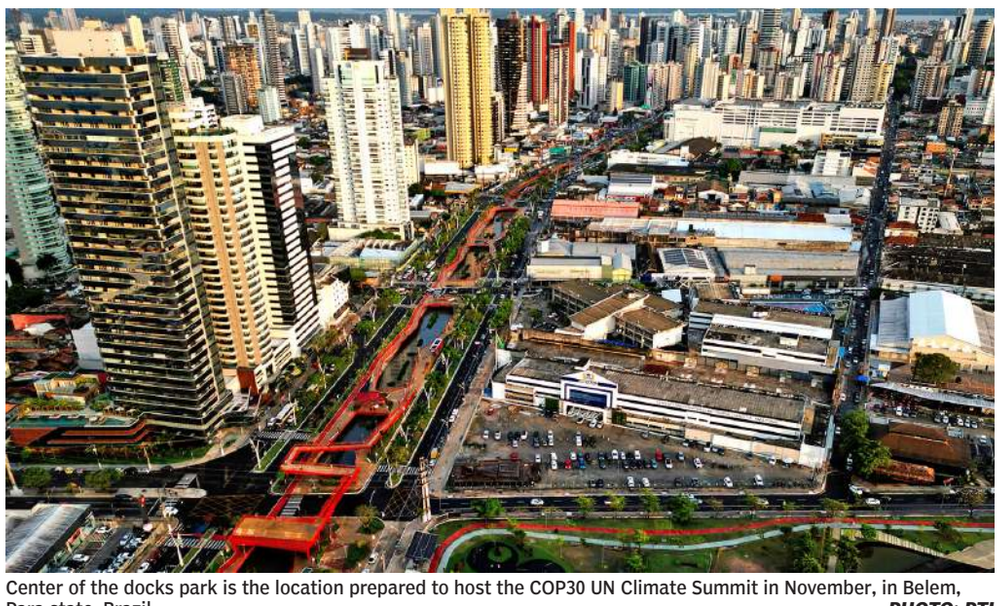
Trump's close ideological ally, President Javier Milei of Argentina called human-caused climate change a "socialist hoax," threatened to quit the Paris Agreement and pulled Argentine negotiators out of last year's summit in Azerbaijan as part of what he described as a reassessment of climate policy.

BRAZIL ILLUSTRATES CLIMATE DILEMMA

Lula, who has presented himself as a champion of climate diplomacy and has been widely praised for reducing deforestation in the Amazon, is hoping to use the conference to push forward action on key climate goals, in contrast to the summits of the past two years that drew legions of oil, gas and coal executives to the major oil-producing nations Azerbaijan and the UAE.

He's expected to launch on Thursdays an initiative called the Tropical Forests Forever Fund, which aims to support more than 70 developing countries that commit to rainforest preservation.

The official COP website describes the initiative as a "permanent trust fund" that would generate about $4 from the private sector for every $1 contributed. But Brazil is also a major oil producer, and contradictions abound



Center of the docks park is the location prepared to host the COP30 UN Climate Summit in November, in Belem, Para state, Brazil
PHOTO: PTI

LOGISTICAL HEADACHES FOR BRAZIL

A town of 1.3 million inhabitants, Belem had just 18,000 hotel beds before its preparations to host the conference, which typically draws tens of thousands of delegates, environmentalists, company executives, journalists and other members of civil society.

Foreign officials and journalists scrambled to reserve rooms as prices surged to surreal heights. Some booked spots on one of a few docked cruise ships brought into a nearby port for the occasion.

Public schools, military facilities and even the local Internal Revenue Building have been outfitted with air-conditioning and bunk beds to become makeshift hostels. The more adventurous or frugal participants can pay $55 a night to crash in hammocks in a facility that normally caters to cats.

"Some two-legged creatures deserve our generosity, too," Eugênia Lima, the 59-year-old owner of a local cat hotel that stopped accepting feline guests to seize on spiking demand during COP30.

ACTIVISTS FIND A PROTEST FORUM

Large-scale marches, sit-ins and rallies are essential aspects of annual UN climate talks, but the previous three summits have taken place in autocratic nations that outlaw most forms of protest.

Egypt, the UAE and Azerbaijan complied with UN rules that facilitate pre-approved protests within a walled-off part of the venue not subject to local laws.

Brazil is a different story. Even before the start of the leaders' summit, on Wednesday demonstrators were revelling in their much-missed freedom. Youth activists, Indigenous leaders and climate campaigners sailed into Belem on vessels outfitted with giant protest banners.

"Action, justice, hope" read one sign strung between the sails of a boat belonging to environmental group Greenpeace. "Respect the Amazon" read another. Dozens disembarked after multi-day river journeys to rally along the coast.

"Being able to protest and dialogue is a great thing about this COP," said Laurent Durieux, a researcher at the US-based International Relief and Development organisation who arrived by boat from Santarem, a city 1,200 kilometres west of Belem. *—PTI*

12 killed in UPS cargo plane crash in Kentucky

LOUISVILLE, 6 NOV

A UPS cargo plane crashed shortly after takeoff from Louisville, killing at least 12 people, including a child. The McDonnell Douglas MD-11's left wing caught fire and an engine detached mid-air, leading to a fiery explosion as it crashed near Louisville Muhammad Ali International Airport. Todd Inman of the National Transportation Safety Board stated, "Airport security video shows the left engine detaching from the wing." First responders are doubtful about finding more survivors amid a widespread debris field. A fire spread to nearby businesses, causing further explosions, with the governor cautioning that the death toll could rise. Authorities are investigating the cause of the fire and engine failure, with answers expected to take over a year.—*PTI*

UAE claims to support truce in Sudan

ABU DHABI, 6 NOV

The United Arab Emirates said it supports regional and international efforts aimed at implementing an immediate humanitarian truce, and achieving a comprehensive ceasefire in Sudan. In a statement, the UAE strongly condemned and denounced the grave humanitarian violations and horrific crimes committed against civilians by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in Sudan, including the recently seized city of el-Fasher. Satellite images appear to show mass burials being conducted in el-Fasher – where the paramilitary killed thousands after taking control. The UAE has been accused of supporting the RSF in order to control the gold mines. —*ANI*

Pirates board ship near Somalia with rocket-grenades

DUBAI, 6 NOV

In a resurgence of piracy, attackers armed with machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades boarded a Malta-flagged tanker off the coast of Somalia, while it was en route from India to South Africa. The UK's Maritime Trade Operations centre issued an alert following the incident, marking a worrying increase in pirate activity in the region. Reports suggest that the attackers had recently seized an Iranian fishing vessel to serve as a base for operations. Though piracy peaked in 2011, recent instability in the region has contributed to a revival of attacks. In 2024, seven piracy incidents were documented; this year has already seen multiple seizures, reflecting an alarming trend in maritime security.—*PTI*

Meghan Markle to return to acting after 7 years

LOS ANGELES, 6 NOV

Meghan Markle is returning to acting for the first time since 2018 with a cameo in Jason Orley's upcoming comedy 'Close Personal Friends', starring Lily Collins, Jack Quaid, Brie Larson and Henry Golding, Variety reports. The film, currently shooting in Los Angeles, follows an ordinary couple who befriend a celebrity pair during a trip to Santa Barbara, leading to chaos. The screenplay is by Isaac Aptaker, who co-wrote the story with Orley and is producing alongside Elizabeth Berger. Markle, best known as Rachel Zane in Suits, last acted seven years ago before marrying Prince Harry. She now runs Archewell Productions with him. —*PTI*

PHOTO: X

Supreme Court question legality of Trump's tariffs

Judges ask if emergency laws give him unlimited power

WASHINGTON, 6 NOV

A majority of Supreme Court justices seemed sceptical on Wednesday about US President Donald Trump's ability to unilaterally impose far-reaching tariffs, putting at risk a cornerstone of his agenda in the biggest legal test yet of his unprecedented presidency.

Three Conservative justices raised questions about whether an emergency law gives Trump near-limitless power to set and change duties on imports, with potentially trillion-dollar implications for the global economy.

The court's three Liberal justices also appeared dubious, so at least two Conservative votes could limit Trump's tariff power.

The case is the first major piece of Trump's agenda to come squarely before the nation's highest court, which he helped shape by naming three of the nine justices in his first term. The Conservative majority has so far been reluctant to check his extraordinary flex of executive power in short-term orders. That could change with a more detailed ruling in the tariff case.

The Constitution says Congress has the power to levy tariffs. But, in a first, the Trump administration argues that an emergency law allowing the President to regulate importation also includes tariffs. Justice Amy Coney Barrett and Chief Justice John Roberts raised questions about whether the emergency-power law allowed for tariffs on "any product, from any country, in any amount, for any length of time".

Trump has called the case one of the most important in the country's history and said a ruling against him would be catastrophic for the economy.

The challengers argue the 1977 emergency powers law Trump used doesn't even mention tariffs, and no President before has used it to impose them.

The case centres on two sets of tariffs. The first came in February on imports from Canada, China and Mexico over drug trafficking. The second involves the sweeping "reciprocal" tariffs on most countries that Trump announced in April. —*PTI*

At a time when 42 million Americanscould lose their food security, Trump threw a Great Gatsby themed Halloween party at Mar-a-Lago which allegedly cost $3.4 million. Here are scenes from his party

Air traffic to be down by 10% in 40 airports

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) announced that it will reduce air traffic by 10 per cent across 40 "high-volume" markets beginning Friday due to the longest US government shutdown. This will impact thousands of flights nationwide.

The FAA is confronting staffing shortages among air traffic controllers who have been working unpaid since the shutdown began 1 October.

There have already been numerous delays at airports across the country – sometimes hours long – because the FAA slows down or stops traffic temporarily anytime it is short on controllers. —*PTI*

X/@ZohranKMamdani)

NYC mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani caught up with US Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez over a Nepalese meal of chilli chicken & momos

Mamdani announces all women team

NEW YORK, 6 NOV

Fresh off his historic victory in New York City's mayoral election, Zohran Mamdani on Wednesday announced a slate of seasoned officials to help lead his transition to City Hall, offering an early glimpse at how he intends to turn his ambitious campaign promises into reality.

"In the coming months, I and my team will build a City Hall capable of delivering on the promises of this campaign," Mamdani, a Democratic socialist, said at his first news conference as mayor-elect.

"We will form an administration that is equal parts capable and compassionate, driven by integrity and willing to work just as hard as the millions of New Yorkers who call this city home."

That all-woman transition team will include two former deputy mayors, Maria Torres-Springer and Melanie Hartzog; former Federal Trade Commission Chair Lina Khan; and Grace Bonilla, the head of United Way of New York City, a non-profit focused on low-income residents. Political strategist Elana Leopold will serve as executive director of the team.

Among his campaign's promises are free child care, free city bus service, city-run grocery stores and a new Department of Community Safety that would expand on an existing city initiative that sends mental healthcare workers, rather than police, to handle certain emergency calls. —*PTI*

The US fired an unarmed intercontinental ballistic missile nearly a week after Trump said US would restart testing nuclear weapons **PHOTO: PTI**

Trump won't go to SA's G20 summit

Trump said he will not attend the G20 Summit in South Africa on 22-23 November. "I am not going.... South Africa shouldn't even be in the Gs anymore because what's happened there is bad," Trump said at a business forum. South Africa, which assumed the year-long G20 Presidency on 1 December, 2024, will be hosting the first meeting of the group on African soil.

I thought it was a very angry speech, certainly angry toward me, and I think he should be very nice to me. You know, I'm the one that sort of has to approve a lot of things coming to him. So he's off to a bad start

Donald Trump, US President. When he criticised Mamdani, "or whatever his name is", he started his YMCA dance

Violence mars B'desh rallies

DHAKA, 6 NOV

Violence broke out in several places during the campaign for the upcoming national parliamentary elections in Bangladesh in February 2026.

Ershad Ullah, a candidate nominated from the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) was shot at in Chittagong on Wednesday during the election campaign. Another candidate, Monowar Sarkar, Monowar Sarkar, has alleged that his house in Comilla was set on fire by miscreants.

The Interim Government strongly condemned the violent attacks.

"Immediate investigation by the Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) indicates that Ershad Ullah was not the target of the attack, but a stray bullet hit and injured him. A full probe has been ordered," the Interim government said in a statement.

"The Interim Government calls on all political actors and their supporters to uphold calm, show restraint, and ensure that the February general election takes place in an atmosphere of peace, dignity, and fairness," the statement said.

BNP blamed the Conservative Jamaat-e-Islami for spoiling the political environment in the country.

Meanwhile, Bangladeshi artists returned to Pakistan after 18 years with their presence at the World Culture Festival being held here, marking a renewed chapter in cultural exchanges between the two countries. —*Agencies*

IF AFGHAN TALKS FAIL, WE WILL HAVE WAR: PAK

ISLAMABAD, 6 NOV

Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif on Wednesday said that a delegation from the country had departed for Istanbul to hold talks with the Afghan Taliban.

He warned that if talks failed, it would force the two neighbours into "war". By the end of the day, Pakistan had allegedly violate the ceasefire and attacked civilian areas in Afghanistan.

A second round of discussions between Pakistani and Afghan Taliban delegations began in Istanbul on 25 October, but collapsed on 29 October. Islamabad claimed that Kabul was unwilling to curb terrorism.

Asif said, "The delegation has gone today and the negotiations will begin tomorrow morning." Asked about the possibility of a positive outcome, he said, "Talks are only engaged in if there is a possibility of progress; otherwise, it is a waste of time."

Separately in an interview with Geo TV, he said "If talks fail, only war will happen."

Dozens were killed in border clashes on both side as Islamabad launched strikes deep into Afghan territory over an increase in terrorism on Pakistani soil. —*Agencies*

Israel blocks aid into Gaza

JERUSALEM, 6 NOV

Israel has allegedly blocked "10,000 truckloads" of aid from crossing into Gaza, with Jordan, the UK and prominent rights groups among those voicing condemnation.

Since a shooting at the border seven weeks ago, Israel has refused to allow aid from Jordan to enter Gaza via Israel.

That means 10,000 truckloads – including 6,000 belonging to the World Food Programme (WFP) partner and 3,000 to the Jordanian authorities – are gathering dust despite the urgent need, Jordanian government sources told The Independent.

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) said since the start of the US-brokered October ceasefire, the Israeli authorities have rejected 23 requests to deliver aid from nine aid agencies.

Meanwhile, Israeli authorities confirmed Thursday that the remains of a hostage returned the previous day from Gaza are of a Tanzanian agricultural student in Israel who was killed on 7 October, 2023, in the Hamas-led attack that started the war.

The development was the latest step forward under the US-brokered ceasefire. The office of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the remains were identified as those of Joshua Loitu Mollel and that his family has been notified.

Mollel, 21, had arrived at kibbutz Nahal Oz only 19 days before the attack. — *Agencies*

Typhoon kills over 114 in Philippines

MANILA, 6 NOV

The Philippines is reeling from the impact of Typhoon Kalmaegi, which has left at least 114 people dead and over 100 missing, prompting President Ferdinand Marcos Jr to declare a state of emergency on Thursday.

The fatalities mainly resulted from drowning in flash floods, particularly in Cebu, where 127 individuals are still unaccounted for.

The natural disaster has affected nearly two million people and displaced more than 5,60,000, with around 4,50,000 individuals evacuated to emergency shelters.

As the typhoon exited the archipelago into the South China Sea on Wednesday, the authorities in Vietnam readied for its arrival.

Ho Chi Minh City faces an increased risk of the severe flooding, with high tides on the Saigon River expected to coincide with heavy rainfall, potentially inundating low-lying areas. Marcos stated the declaration of a "state of national calamity" would facilitate faster disbursement of emergency funds.

Concerns are also growing about another potential tropical cyclone approaching the Philippines. Meanwhile, a corruption scandal involving substandard or non-existent flood-control projects across the Philippines has sparked public outrage. —*PTI*

Vehicles are stacked on top of each other due to flooding caused by Typhoon Kalmaegi, in Liloan, Cebu province, central Philippines on Thursday **PHOTO: PTI**

WORLD-CLASS SECURITY

Louvre's security password was 'LOUVRE'

PARIS, 6 NOV

The password to the Louvre's video surveillance system was simply "Louvre," at the time of the brazen heist of $102 million in jewels from the world-famous museum in October, a museum employee with knowledge of the system stated.

While testifying before the French Senate committee, Laurence des Cars, the President and Director of Louvre, said the only camera installed outside the Apollo Gallery was facing west and did not cover the window through which the thieves broke in by using power tool and later exited.

The thieves conducted the robbery within seven minutes thieves and exited the targeted Apollo Gallery on a truck-mounted mechanical cherry picker.

The President of Louvre testified before the French Senate that the camera did not face the window the robbers entered from **PHOTO: LE LOUVRE**

Meanwhile, authorities are trying hard to locate the missing jewels, even though four suspects have been charged in connection with the high-profile robbery.

The arrests have led to new searches and the seizure of new objects that are being examined by investigators.

- Authorities are trying hard to locate the missing jewels, even though four suspects have been charged in connection with the high-profile $102 million robbery.

One more person involved in the robbery is yet to be apprehended.

The police had arrested first a taxi driver, 39, and a delivery man and garbage collector, 34, from the northern Parisian suburbs. Later a man, 37 and his domestic partner, 38, were also picked up from the city's northern region.

The first two suspects have partially admitted their involvement" in the robbery. —*Agencies*

KYIV STRIKES OIL REFINERIES; MOSCOW TARGETS INFRA

KYIV/MOSCOW, 6 NOV

Ukraine reportedly struck and damaged Russia's Volgograd oil refinery overnight on 6 November, Russian Telegram media channels reported. Explosions reportedly rocked several Russian energy sites, but the extent to the damage is unclear.

Meanwhile, Bulgaria is preparing to seize control of Lukoil's Burgas oil refinery and sell it to a new owner after the Russian oil company came under US sanctions, according to Bulgarian media reports.

- Bulgaria is preparing to seize control of Lukoil's Burgas oil refinery and sell it to a new owner as the firm came under US sanctions

Burgas, Bulgaria's only oil refinery, is part of Lukoil and now runs the risk of having to shut down because of the sanctions.

Meanwhile, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that Russian strikes injured eight people in Dnipro region. He said on X that Moscow launched a total of 135 drones at Ukraine.

—*Agencies*

PHOTO: AI

Gold rebounds by Rs 600 to Rs 1.24 lakh/10g

NEW DELHI, 6 NOV

Snapping the two-day losing streak, gold prices on Thursday rebounded by Rs 600 to Rs 1,24,700 per 10g in the national capital on a fresh wave of buying by traders and firm global cues. Gold of 99.5 per cent purity increased by Rs 600 to Rs 1,24,100 per 10g (inclusive of all taxes), according to All India Sarafa Association. Silver prices rallied by Rs 1,800 to Rs 1,53,300 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes) on Thursday. Bullion markets were closed on Wednesday on account of the Prakash Gurpurb Sri Guru Nanak Dev holiday. Globally, spot gold rose $28.96, or 0.73 per cent to $4,008.19 per ounce while spot silver was trading 1.22 per cent higher at $48.60 an ounce. *—PTI*

Rupee rises by 7P to 88.63 against US dollar

MUMBAI, 6 NOV

The rupee appreciated 7 paise to 88.63 against the US dollar on Thursday, supported by a weak American currency against major rivals overseas and lower global crude oil prices. However, subdued sentiment in domestic equity markets and continued outflow of foreign capital prevented a sharp gain in the Indian currency, forex traders said. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 88.51 and touched the intraday high of 88.49 against the greenback. The unit also hit the intra-day low of 88.66 before ending the session at 88.63, up 7 paise from its previous closing level. Meanwhile, the dollar index, fell 0.23 per cent to 99.83. *—PTI*

Nissan sells HQ building to raise cash amid losses

TOKYO, 6 NOV

Troubled Japanese automaker Nissan Motor Co has announced the sale of its headquarters building in Yokohama for 97 billion yen ($630 million) as part of its revival strategy. The company will lease back the building, continuing to utilise it as its headquarters, and will record a gain of 73.9 billion yen ($480 million) from the sale to Tokyo-based real estate operator MJI Godo Kaisha. The funds raised will be invested in modernising internal systems, accelerating the adoption of AI-driven technologies and enhancing digital operations across the company, known for its March subcompact and Infiniti luxury models. MJI Godo is a special purpose trust owned by Minth Group, a prominent auto parts manufacturer listed in Hong Kong. *—PTI*

ArcelorMittal posts 31% rise in Q2 profit

NEW DELHI, 6 NOV

Steel and mining major ArcelorMittal reported a 31.35 per cent increase in net income to $377 million for the September quarter, compared with $287 million a year earlier. The Luxembourg-based company, which follows a January–December financial year, said its sales rose 3 per cent to $15.66 billion, up from $15.19 billion in the same period last year. Its Indian joint venture, AMNS India, recorded a 2.6 per cent fall in sales to $1.50 billion, but EBITDA grew to $217 million from $162 million, supported by higher production of 1.83 million tonnes, against 1.74 million tonnes a year ago. Chief Executive Aditya Mittal said the company had delivered resilient results in a seasonally weak quarter and remained optimistic about 2026, expecting gains from more supportive industry policies. *—PTI*

'India's service sector falls to 5-month low in Oct'

NEW DELHI, 6 NOV

India's services sector growth witnessed the slowest pace of expansion in five months in October, as competitive pressures and heavy rains in parts of the country led to a slower increase in output, according to a monthly survey released on Thursday.

The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Services PMI Business Activity Index fell from 60.9 in September to 58.9 in October, indicating the slowest pace of expansion since May.

Notwithstanding the moderation, the October Services PMI index was comfortably above both the neutral mark of 50 and its long-run average of 54.3.

In the Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) parlance, a print above 50 means expansion, while a score below 50 denotes contraction.

"India's services PMI softened to 58.9 in October, which represented the slowest pace of expansion since May. Competitive pressures and heavy rains were cited as contributors to the sequential slowdown," Pranjul Bhandari, Chief India Economist at HSBC, said.

While factors like demand buoyancy and GST (Goods and Services Tax) relief reportedly led to an improvement in operating conditions, competition and heavy rains constrained growth, as per the HSBC India Services PMI, compiled by S&P Global from responses to questionnaires sent to a panel of around 400 service sector companies, said.

The international demand for Indian services improved further, as signalled by another increase in external sales. The rate of expansion was solid, though the weakest since March, as per the survey.

Meanwhile, the combined output of India's manufacturing and service sectors continued to expand sharply in October, but growth lost momentum. *—PTI*

PhysicsWallah sets IPO price band at Rs 103-109 per share

The Rs 3,480 cr IPO will open on 11 Nov & conclude on 13 Nov

NEW DELHI, 6 NOV

Edtech unicorn PhysicsWallah on Thursday fixed a price band of Rs 103-109 per share for its upcoming initial public offering (IPO), aiming for a valuation of over Rs 31,500 crore at the upper end.

The company's Rs 3,480-crore maiden public offering will open on 11 November and conclude on 13 November and anchor investors will be allocated shares on 10 November, according to its public announcement.

The upcoming IPO comprises a fresh issue of equity shares worth Rs 3,100 crore and an offer for sale (OFS) of shares aggregating up to Rs 380 crore by promoters.

Promoters Alakh Pandey and Prateek Boob will each offload shares worth Rs 190 crore through the OFS. At present, both hold 40.31 per cent stake each in the company.

The Noida-based company filed draft papers in March with Sebi for an IPO through a confidential pre-filing route and had received the market regulator's approval in July.

Following this, the company filed an updated DRHP in September before filing an RHP.

The company opted for the confidential pre-filing route, which allowed it to withhold public disclosure of IPO details until later stages.

Funds will be based to fuel the company's expansion and growth initiatives.

Of the fresh issue proceeds, PhysicsWallah said Rs 460.5 crore will go towards fit-outs of new offline and hybrid centers and Rs 548.3 crore will be used for lease payments of existing centers.

PhysicsWallah offers test preparation courses for competitive exams focusing on JEE, NEET, GATE and UPSC along with upskilling programs, delivered through online platforms (YouTube, website, and apps), tech-enabled offline centers, and hybrid centers that combine online teaching with in-person support.

PhysicsWallah will make its stock market debut on 18 November. *—PTI*

PhysicsWallah co-founders Alakh Pandey and Prateek Boob

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Orkla India shares gain 3% on market debut

NEW DELHI, 6 NOV

Shares of Orkla India Ltd, the owner of leading spice and condiment brands MTR and Eastern, made a steady market debut on Thursday, listing at a premium of nearly 3 per cent over the issue price of Rs 730 per share. The stock opened at Rs 751.50 on the BSE, up 2.94 per cent, and at Rs 750.10 on the NSE, reflecting 2.75 per cent gain.

At the time of listing, the company's market capitalisation stood at Rs 9,561.85 crore. Orkla India's Rs 1,667-crore initial public offering (IPO) saw strong investor interest, being subscribed 48.73 times on the final day of bidding last week. The issue, priced in the range of Rs 695 to Rs 730, was entirely an offer for sale (OFS) of 2.28 crore equity shares by the promoter & other shareholders, with no fresh issuance.

Formerly known as MTR Foods, Orkla India is a multi-category Indian food company producing a wide range of products including spices, ready-to-eat meals, sweets, and breakfast mixes under brands such as MTR, Rasoi Magic, and Eastern. *—PTI*

Groww IPO gets fully subscribed on 2nd Day

NEW DELHI, 6 NOV

The initial public offering (IPO) of Billionbrains Garage Ventures, the parent company of stockbroking firm Groww, achieved full subscription on its second day of sale. Bids for 39,16,33,950 shares were received, surpassing the 36,47,76,528 shares on offer, representing a subscription rate of 1.07 times.

Retail Individual Investors (RIIs) showed strong interest, with their portion being subscribed 3.62 times, while non-institutional investors subscribed at 1.32 times. The Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIBs) category saw 10 per cent subscription.

The company secured over Rs 2,984 crore from anchor investors earlier in the week. The Rs 6,632 crore IPO, priced between Rs 95-100 per share, will conclude on Friday, targeting a valuation exceeding Rs 61,700 crore (about USD 7 billion).

Proceeds from the IPO will fund technology development, business expansion, and enhance capital for its NBFC arm, Groww Creditserv Technology Pvt Ltd. Groww's stock market debut is set for 12 November. *—PTI*

RS 2,929 CR FRAUD

Bank fraud case: ED issues summons to Anil Ambani

NEW DELHI, 6 NOV

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has issued new summons to **Anil Ambani**, Chairman of the Reliance Group, requesting his presence for questioning on 14 November in connection with an alleged bank fraud and money laundering case. This follows a previous interrogation in August, where Ambani was questioned for approximately ten hours.

The current inquiry is linked to a case involving Reliance Communication Ltd (RCom) and a purported loan fraud of Rs 2,929 crore with the State Bank of India (SBI). Sources indicated that the ED intends to record Ambani's statement under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) once he appears.

This investigation originates from an FIR registered by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on 21 August. The CBI conducted searches at Ambani's premises in Mumbai, following a complaint from SBI, which cited RCom's outstanding debts exceeding Rs 40,000 crore and a specific loss of Rs 2,929.05 crore to the public sector bank as per 2018 data.

Following the CBI's actions, a spokesperson for Ambani asserted that the SBI allegations relate to issues over ten years old.

The spokesperson further noted that SBI had withdrawn proceedings against five other non-executive directors while "selectively" singling out Ambani. *—PTI*

MAHINDRA SELLS ENTIRE STAKE IN RBL BANK FOR RS 678 CRORE

NEW DELHI, 6 NOV

Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) on Thursday said it has sold 3.53 per cent stake in RBL Bank for Rs 678 crore, representing a 62.5 per cent gain on the investment.

On 26 July, 2023, the Mumbai-based diversified firm had announced the acquisition of a 3.53 per cent stake in RBL Bank as a treasury investment at a cost of Rs 417 crore.

"In furtherance to above, we would like to inform you that the company has today sold its entire stake in RBL Bank for a consideration of Rs 678 crore representing a 62.5 per cent gain on the investment," M&M said in a regulatory filing.

According to the block deal data available on the NSE, M&M offloaded 2.11 crore (2,11,43,000) shares or a 3.45 per cent stake in RBL Bank.

The transaction was valued around Rs 677.95 crore, and was executed at an average price of Rs 320.65 apiece. *—PTI*

Markets fall for 2nd day amid volatile trade

MUMBAI, 6 NOV

Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty closed lower in a highly volatile trade on Thursday amid relentless foreign fund outflows and selling in blue-chip ICICI Bank.

Falling for the second day in a row, the 30-share BSE Sensex declined 148.14 points or 0.18 per cent to settle at 83,311.01. During the day, it hit a high of 83,846.35 and a low of 83,237.65.

The 50-share NSE Nifty dipped by 87.95 points or 0.34 per cent to 25,509.70.

Among Sensex firms, Power Grid fell the most by 3.15 per cent. Eternal dropped by 2.44 per cent, Bharat Electronics by 1.67 per cent, and Bajaj Finance by 1.45 per cent. ICICI Bank and NTPC fell by 1.21 per cent each, dragging the index down. However, Asian Paints, Reliance Industries, Mahindra & Mahindra and UltraTech Cement were among gainers.

India's services sector growth witnessed the slowest pace of expansion in five months in October, as competitive pressures and heavy rains in parts of the country led to a slower increase in output, according to a monthly survey released on Thursday.

A total of 3,012 stocks declined while 1,202 advanced and 139 remained unchanged on the BSE. *—PTI*

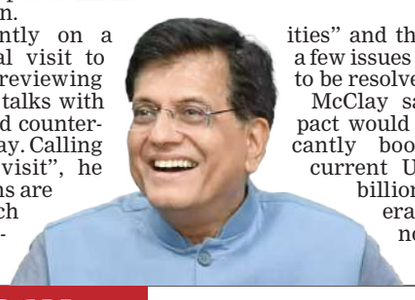
India, New Zealand to finalise trade pact soon, says Goyal

ROTORUA, 6 NOV

- Piyush Goyal, currently on a four-day visit to Auckland, is reviewing the progress of talks with his NZ counterpart Todd McClay.

Commerce and Industry Minister **Piyush Goyal** said on Thursday that negotiations between India and New Zealand on a free trade agreement (FTA) are advancing swiftly, with hopes of finalising the deal soon.

Goyal, currently on a four-day official visit to Auckland, is reviewing the progress of talks with his New Zealand counterpart Todd McClay. Calling it a "historic visit", he said both nations are "respecting each other's sensitivities" and that only a few issues remain to be resolved.



McClay said the pact would significantly boost the current USD 1.5 billion bilateral trade, noting a 10 per cent rise over the past year.

He added that the agreement would strengthen cooperation in agri-technology, science and innovation, and confirmed the potential for technology transfer in the agriculture and dairy sectors.

The fourth round of negotiations is under way in Auckland, focusing on trade in goods, services and Rules of Origin.

The FTA discussions, formally launched in March 2025, follow earlier talks under the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement, which stalled in 2015. *—PTI*

FM says India needs world-class banks

MUMBAI, 6 NOV

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday said the country needs big and world-class banks, and discussions are on with the Reserve Bank and lenders in this regard. Addressing the 12th SBI Banking & Economics Conclave, she asked lenders to deepen and widen credit flow to the industry, exuding confidence that GST rate cut-driven demand would unleash a virtuous investment cycle. Stressing that India needs lot of big and world-class banks, she said the "government is looking at this and work has already commenced. We are discussing with RBI. We are discussing with banks". *—PTI*

9.57% SHARES FOR $896M

Qatar Airways to sell stake in Cathay Pacific

DUBAI, 6 NOV

Qatar Airways will sell its stake in Hong Kong-based Cathay Pacific Airways in a share buyback valued at $896 million, the companies announced, ending the Qatari carrier's eight-year involvement with the airline.

The announcement came late Wednesday in a stock market filing by Cathay Pacific, which saw its shares gain 4.2 per cent on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange on Thursday.

Under the agreement, Qatar Airways will sell all of its holdings, which represent 9.57 per cent of Cathay Pacific stock. The airline's other major shareholders are Swire Pacific and Air China. The plan is subject to shareholder approval.

"The buy-back reflects our strong confidence in the future of the Cathay Group and underscores our commitment to the development of the Hong Kong international aviation hub," Cathay Group chairman Patrick Healy said in a statement announcing the sale.

Qatar Airways, a state-owned airline flying out of the sprawling Hamad International Airport in Doha, did not acknowledge the sale itself. However, the Cathay Pacific statement included a comment from its CEO Badr Mohammed al-Meer saying the move represented the airline's "disciplined approach to portfolio management and our commitment to delivering sustainable value for our shareholders".

Qatar Airways did not respond to a request for comment from The Associated Press on Thursday.

Qatar Airways bought its stake in Cathay Pacific in 2017 in a deal valued at the time around $662 million. Back then, Cathay Pacific faced financial losses and layoffs amid increasing competition from other airlines. *—PTI*

Epic Games, Google settle legal battle over Play Store

SAN FRANCISCO, 6 NOV

- Epic won a victory when a federal appeals court upheld a jury verdict condemning Google's app store as an illegal monopoly.

Video game maker Epic Games has reached a "comprehensive settlement" with Google that could end its 5-year-old legal crusade targeting Google's Play Store for Android apps.

Epic and Google revealed the settlement agreement in a joint legal document they filed in a San Francisco federal court. They said it "would make Android a more vibrant and competitive platform for users and developers".

Epic, maker of online game Fortnite, won a victory when a federal appeals court upheld a jury verdict condemning Google's Android app store as an illegal monopoly. The settlement closely follows a previous ruling ordering Google to tear down the digital walls shielding its Android app store from competition, including a provision requiring its app store to distribute rival third-party app stores so consumers can download them to their phones.

Epic Games filed lawsuits targeting Google's Play Store and Apple's iPhone app store in 2020 to bypass exclusive payment processing systems that charged 15 per cent to 30 per cent commissions on in-app transactions. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

RCB appoints Malolan as women's head coach

BENGALURU, 6 NOV

Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) on Thursday named former Tamil Nadu spinner Malolan Rangarajan as the head coach of their women's team ahead of the fourth WPL season next year. Rangarajan replaces Luke Williams, who was appointed as head coach in 2024. The Australian is set to miss the WPL (Women's Premier League) due to his commitments with Adelaide Strikers in the Big Bash League. "Malolan Rangarajan, a key member of the RCB support staff for the last six years in various roles, has now been appointed as head coach for the upcoming WPL cycle," RCB posted on their official X handle. —*PTI*

Not focused on legacy yet: Lionel Messi

MIAMI, 6 NOV

Lionel Messi already is considered the greatest soccer player ever. That said, he thinks there's still more for him to accomplish. The Inter Miami star told a business conference on Wednesday that there will be a time to reflect on what he's done in his soccer life. But those days, he said, won't happen until he retires, and given that he has a contract to continue playing through 2028, that may not be anytime soon. "It's not something I've thought about or worried about," Messi said in Spanish when asked about his legacy. "When I retire, as the years go by, obviously, I'll value everything I did in my career and what I achieved professionally much more. But today is the time to keep enjoying myself and to keep playing." —*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Diksha best Indian after first round in Aramco China

SHENZHEN, 6 NOV

Golfer Diksha Dagar, coming back from the break she took after the women's Indian Open, carded 1-under 72 to be placed T-42 after the first round of the Aramco China Championship, here on Thursday.Pranavi Urs was the next best Indian after Dagar, carding an even-par 73 to be placed T-57. Two other Indians in the field, Tvesa Malik and Avani Prashanth, carded 1-over 74 to be in tied-75th place. Moa Folke of Sweden is leading the field by one stroke. She carded 6-under 67 to secure a one-shot lead over the trio of Alice of England.—*PTI*

PHOTO: X/@PCB

Hermann replaces injured Brevis in South Africa squad

KARACHI, 6 NOV

Cricket South Africa on Thursday called up wicket-keeper-batter Rubin Hermann for the remainder of their ODI series against Pakistan as a replacement for injured Dewald Brevis. Brevis, who was hurt on his shoulder while fielding during the third T20I in Lahore, will remain with the South African squad to prepare for the two-Test tour of India, starting on 14 November. Hermann was a part of South Africa's A side, currently playing a two-match unofficial Test series against India A. —*PTI*

India bundle Australia out for 119, take 2-1 series lead

Axar Patel's all-round brilliance leads India to 48-run win

CARRARA, 6 NOV

India defended a modest total with a stifling bowling performance for a 48-run win over Australia in the fourth T20 International to grab an unassailable 2-1 lead in the five-match series here on Thursday.

The architects of India's win were Axar Patel and Shivam Dube, who shared two wickets each to put Australia on the back foot in the run chase.

The final T20 will be played in Brisbane on November 8.

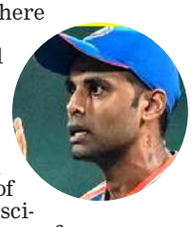
The opening match of the series was washed out in Canberra.Openers Matthew Short (30 off 24) and Mitchell Marsh (25 off 19) got Australia off the blocks smoothly in the run chase, but a flurry of wickets in the middle overs pushed the hosts to a point of no return. After Axar trapped Short in the power play, Dube removed Marsh and Tim David (14 off 9) in successive overs to make a telling impact on the game. The wicket of Marsh came off his second ball before he surprised David with a short ball in the following over. Arshdeep Singh too picked a wicket in the middle overs, and the game seemed done and dusted when Glenn Maxwell saw his exposed stumps disturbed off the last ball of Varun Chakaravarthy's fourth over.

Abhishek could have been out off the game's second ball by left-arm pacer Ben Dwarshuis, but Xavier Bartlett grassed the early opportunity.

Axar Patel PHOTO: PTI

Smart batting, adapting to conditions key to win: SKY

India skipper Suryakumar Yadav credited his players' tactical awareness with bat and ball for his team's 48-run victory over Australia in the fourth T20 here on Thursday.



Axar Patel and Shivam Dube played pivotal roles as India defended a modest total of 168 with a disciplined bowling performance to take a 2-1 lead in the five-match series.

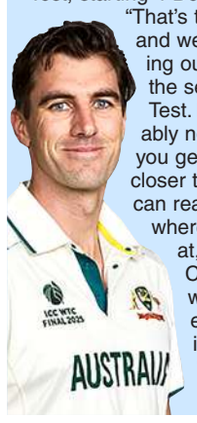
"I feel credit goes to all the batters. The way Shubman and Abhishek started, they knew this was not a 200-220 wicket. They batted very smartly. It was a complete team effort from the batters," Suryakumar said at the post-match presentation.

Defending a competitive score, the Indian bowlers produced a clinical display, with all of them among the wickets. "The message is clear. And Gauti (Gautam Gambhir) bhai, we are on the same page. There was a little dew, but the bowlers adapted quickly," he added.

India 167 for 8 (Gill 46, Ellis 3-21, Zampa 3-45) beat Australia 119 (Marsh 30, Washington 3-3, Axar 2-20, Dube 2-20) by 48 runs —*PTI*

Cummins aiming to return for 2nd Ashes Test

Australia captain Pat Cummins is track to return for the second Ashes Test but admitted that he might not play all four remaining matches against England, given the short turnarounds between games. Australia will be captained by Steve Smith as Cummins will miss the all-important Ashes opener due to a back injury, and even though he expects to be bowling full tilt by the first Test, a decision on his return will be taken closer to the second Test, starting 4 December.



"That's the aim, and we're building our plan for the second Test. It's probably not until you get a bit closer that you can really know where you're at," Cummins was quoted as saying by 'cricket.

2ND T20I

Chapman stars as NZ holds out West Indies by 3 runs

AUCKLAND, 6 NOV

Mark Chapman blasted 78 from 28 balls, including a half-century from only 19 deliveries, as New Zealand beat the West Indies by three runs and leveled the series at 1-1 on Thursday.

Chapman's assault saw New Zealand add 100 runs from the ninth to the 16th overs on the way to 207-5 after being sent in.The West Indies struggled at first against New Zealand's three-pronged spin attack and were 94-6 after 13 overs.But outstanding hitting by Rovman Powell, who made 45 from 16 balls, Romario Shepherd with 34 from 16, and Matthew Forde with an unbeaten 29 from 13 saw the West Indies reach the last over needing 16 runs with three wickets in hand.

Entrusted with the final over, Kyle Jamieson conceded fours from the first and third balls, the second of which was a no-ball. Powell was out to the fourth ball, caught by Chapman, who took three catches in the innings to complete a player-of-the-match performance.The West Indies needed six from the last two balls but managed only three runs and finished 204-8. Chapman went from 12 off 10 balls to 65 off 22 balls. The West Indies bowlers sent down 11 wides, many of them trying to put the ball out of Chapman's reach. It was reminiscent of the Toronto Blue Jays walking Shohei Otani during the World Series.Chapman was finally out in the 17th over, caught by Jason Holder off his own bowling after hitting six boundaries and seven sixes.After Chapman, Daryl Mitchell made an unbeaten 28 from 14 balls, and Mitchell Santner 18 not out from eight balls. Tim Robinson made 39 at the top of the order.Seales' four overs cost 61 runs. The teams meet in back-to-back matches in Nelson on Sunday and Monday.

Mark Chapman PHOTO: PTI

New Zealand 207 for 5 (Chapman 78, Robinson 39, Chase 2-33) beat West Indies 204 for 8 (Powell 45, Shepherd 34, Santner 3-31, Sodhi 3-39) by three runs. —*PTI*

DHRUV JUREL'S HUNDRED CARRIES INDIA A TO 255

BENGALURU, 6 NOV

Dhruv Jurel gave a scintillating demonstration of his technical nous with a fighting hundred, carrying India A to a respectable 255 all out after a top-order malfunction against South Africa A on the first day of the four-day match here on Thursday. Asked to bat first, India A were in serious trouble, some of their own making, at 126 for seven, but Jurel (132 not out, 175b, 12x4, 4x6) and Kuldeep Yadav (20, 87b) milked 79 runs for a doughty eighth-wicket stand to bail them out.

Jurel's innings stood out for its marvellous adherence to batting technique, helping him survive the vagaries of conditions, pitch, and relentlessness of Protean bowlers under largely overcast skies. Even the six he hit off off-spinner Prenelan over long on was not an explosive act, but more a melange of timing and precise ball placement. —*PTI*

CWC: Gujrathi makes it to Round 3; Sarin ousted

PANJIM, 6 NOV

Grandmaster Vidit Gujrathi finally came out triumphant against 12-year-old Oro Faustino of Argentina, while Nihal Sarin was ousted from the FIDE World Cup after missing several opportunities against Greek Grandmaster Kourkoulos-Arditis Stamatis in the first set of tie-break games, as the second round concluded here on Thursday.

For Nihal, it was a heartbreak as the Kerala Grandmaster was hoping to make a mark in this unique competition that features the world's best players.

However, Stamatis was on course as he kept on adding pressure till Nihal collapsed after getting several chances.

Nihal could have won the match easily as he enjoyed decent positions, but he spurned them even as Stamatis capitalised on the opportunities he got.

India's second major casualty on the day was Aravindh Chithambaram, who lost to compatriot K Venkatramanan after the second set of rapid games.

GM Gujrathi made it to the last-64 stage after some hiccups, defeating Faustino in a match that went into the rapid section. Gujrathi drew the first game and won the second with black to show his class. —*PTI*

Grandmaster Vidit Gujrathi PHOTO: PTI

PRESIDENT MEETS WOMEN'S CRICKET TEAM

President Droupadi Murmu being presented the team's jersey by women's cricket team captain Harmanpreet Kaurat Rashtrapati Bhavan, in New Delhi, on Thursday PHOTO: PTI

Smriti Mandhana named ICC Player of the Month

DUBAI, 6 NOV

Charismatic top-order batter Smriti Mandhana has been nominated for the ICC Women's Player of the Month for October after her string of brilliant performances helped India to lift their maiden Women's ODI World Cup Trophy.

The India vice-captain will be vying for the honour along with South African skipper Laura Wolvaardt and dynamic Australia batter Ashleigh Gardner.

Mandhana led the Indian charge at the top, and her partnerships with opening batter Pratika Rawal created quite a buzz in the showpiece event.

Mandhana, 29, had a relatively quiet start, but soon came into her own with a blistering 80 against seven-time champions Australia, and followed it up with a combative 88 against England. —*PTI*

MCLAREN DRIVERS NORRIS & PIASTRI BATTLE FOR F1 TITLE AS MAX CLOSES IN

SÃO PAULO, 6 NOV

The three-way fight for the Formula 1 title heads to Brazil this week with McLaren's two drivers still battling it out for the top spot in the standings.

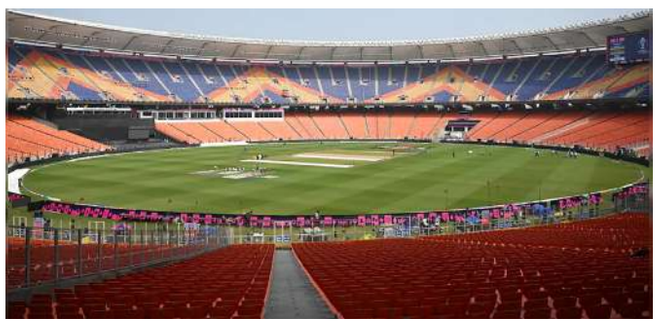
Lando Norris used a win at the Mexican Grand Prix two weeks ago to reclaim the championship lead over Oscar Piastri for the first time in more than six months. But as the two battle each other for their first ever title, four-time defending champion Max Verstappen continues to chip into their lead.

Norris' win in Mexico City gave him a one-point advantage.

It's the closest he's been to the leaders since May, and with five events remaining, McLaren's refusal to designate either Norris or Piastri as its No. 1 could allow Verstappen to win a fifth consecutive title. —*PTI*

Ahmedabad set to host 2026 T20 WC final

NEW DELHI, 6 NOV



The BCCI has shortlisted Ahmedabad, Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, and Mumbai as the venues for next year's T20 World Cup, with the final to be played in Ahmedabad.

The 2023 ODI World Cup final, between India and Australia, was also conducted in Ahmedabad, home to the world's largest cricket stadium with a capacity of over one lakh.

That edition of the marquee competition was held across 10 venues in total.

It is learnt that the ICC will announce the full schedule of the February-March tournament next week.

The event will be co-hosted by Sri Lanka, which will act as a neutral venue for Pakistan as per an agreed arrangement with India.

Three venues in Sri Lanka will host the games, including Colombo.

India will go into the home World Cup as defending champions, having won the previous edition in Barbados in June last year.

The five chosen venues in India are Tier 1 cities and are expected to draw in packed crowds.

If Pakistan reaches the final, the summit clash will be played in Sri Lanka.

Irrespective of the host nation, India and Pakistan will play all their games at a neutral venue till 2027, as per the agreement reached by the ICC, BCCI, and the PCB. —*PTI*

New trial over Maradona's death begins in March

QUITO, 6 NOV

A new trial over the death of Argentine football legend Diego Maradona will begin in March. According to an Argentine court document that the AFP news agency viewed on Wednesday, it will start on 17 March.

Maradona died of heart failure and pulmonary edema on 25 November 2020, at the age of 60, after undergoing brain surgery in a specially rented apartment in a fashionable area north of Buenos Aires.

The public prosecutor's office accuses his doctors and nurses of providing Maradona with inadequate care and thus accepting his death. If convicted, the seven defendants face between eight and 25 years in prison. A first trial failed in May. The background to this is the scandal surrounding one of the judges involved so far, who had appeared without permission in a documentary series about the trial. Three new judges were then appointed in July. —*PTI*

Alcaraz grouped with Djokovic and Sinner with Zverev

TURIN, 6 NOV

Top-seeded Carlos Alcaraz was drawn in a group with Novak Djokovic at the ATP Finals, while defending champion Jannik Sinner was grouped with Alexander Zverev on Thursday.

The Jimmy Connors group features Alcaraz, Djokovic, Taylor Fritz, and Alex de Minaur.

The Bjorn Borg group has Sinner, Zverev, Ben Shelton, and Felix Auger-Aliassime, or Lorenzo Musetti, who are battling for the final spot.

Auger-Aliassime occupies the eighth and final qualifying spot, but Musetti can leapfrog the Canadian if he wins a tournament in Athens this week.

The status of Djokovic, who is also playing in Athens, is questionable. Djokovic, who is a record seven-time champion at the finals, sat out the event last year and has said he will decide whether to play or not after the Athens tournament.

The finals start on Sunday with round-robin play. The top two finishers in each group advance to the semifinals.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE SCORING TABLE

Hat trick moves Osimhen ahead of Kane, Mbappe

AMSTERDAM, 6 NOV

With a hat trick, Victor Osimhen has moved atop the Champions League scoring table.

The Nigerian striker netted all three goals in Galatasaray's 3-0 victory over Ajax in Amsterdam on Wednesday.

Osimhen now has six goals this season in Europe's elite club competition. That's one more than Harry Kane, Kylian Mbappe, and Erling Haaland.

The Istanbul club signed Osimhen to a permanent deal from Napoli in the summer for a record transfer fee in the Turkish League worth reportedly 75 million euros ($86 million).

It's clear why.

The 26-year-old striker needed less than 20 minutes to complete his first hat trick in the competition.

He headed in the opener in the 59th minute off a cross from Leroy Sané. In the 66th and 78th minutes, his perfectly executed spot kicks gave no chance to Ajax goalkeeper Remko Pasveer.

"We have a goal. We know what we want, and we know the magnitude of performance you need in the Champions League," Osimhen told Galatasaray TV.

"We want to match up with the elite. It won't be easy, but we'll go step by step. We have the individual quality to do damage to every team."

In the previous Champions League games this term, he scored the lone goal in a 1-0 victory over Liverpool (also from the spot), and added two more to help Galatasaray beat Bodø/Glimt 3-1. Galatasaray won three straight matches and is ninth with nine points halfway through the league phase.

Paris Saint-Germain, Chelsea, and Saudi club Al-Ahli were all reportedly interested in Osimhen before he moved from Napoli to Galatasaray on a loan deal in September 2024. —*PTI*

Victor Osimhen PHOTO: X/@VICTOR